Jammu
A Clue to Kashmir Tangle

BALRAJ PURI

Tension between Jammu and Kashmir—the two main regions of the State—is mainly responsible for encouraging communalism in Jammu and secessionist sentiments in Kashmir; provoking and reinforcing each other.

Jammu's real hunger is for political power. Complaints about share in services, recruitment and development are merely symptoms of the underlying malaise. Unable to adequately share power, dominant opinion in Jammu has been campaigning for reducing the power of Kashmir by getting it transferred to Delhi. Downfall of Sheikh Abdullah and Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad can to a large extent be attributed to their failure to satisfy Jammu by stopping the process of integration of the State with the Union beyond their respective limits.

A stage must reach sooner than later when the integration cannot be carried any further. How would Jammu react then ?

(Contd. on last flap)

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CONTENTS

The Problem

Jammu and Kashmir, which were united in 1846, are not known to have been mutually well adjusted regions of the State they comprise. The political and administrative set up after 1947 was as conducive to regional tensions as the one it had replaced. The governmental changeovers in 1953 and 1964—precipitated by these tensions—did not much help to remove the basic cause.

In fact political and emotional divergence between the two

regions has been growing over years. Secessionist sentiments in the Valley are fed by communalism in Jammu which in turn is provoked by the fears aroused by the secessionists. Both sentiments are manifestations of mutual mal-adjustment and form a process of cumulative chain reaction.

This volume discusses this pivotal but generally neglected aspect of the Kashmir tangle. It is a collection of my articles on the subject written after independence. They have been edited to avoid too much repetition and to fit them into a running theme.

The present collection also indicates the positions I have held at various points of time. I wonder if there are any public men or writers who are in a position to own all they had said on Kashmir in the past. But my satisfaction in remaining politically consistent is marred by the tragic fact that I struck my head against the walls in Srinagar and Delhi for a substantial part of my public life almost in vain.

These articles are confined to a study of what might be called the Jammu problem. I do not hide my love for Jammu. But I need hardly add that it is not at the cost of my love for Kashmir and my commitments to some basic values.

I have always been concerned over the suppression of the legitimate aspirations of Kashmir as well as Jammu. For many years I was almost alone—till quite a few conscientious Indians took up the cause—in raising my feeble voice against denials of justice to the people of Kashmir by the rest of my country. I sought similar justice for Jammu from Kashmiri leaders. However, I was equally anxious to warn against the dangerous and unhealthy forms of protest that sections of Jammu were tempted to adopt.

Having opposed various manifestations of Indian chauvinism, I sincerely believe that Kashmir would have been far better

off if its leaders, in turn, had succeeded in restraining their local chauvinism. Kashmir has indeed paid very dearly for not working out a satisfactory arrangement for sharing power with Jammu. The cries for abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution and for Presidential rule that are so frequently heard in Jammu are, in fact, cries of impotent dissatisfaction about its present status. For unable to share power, Jammu would like Kashmir to lose it to the Centre. Rationalisations in terms of integration and intense nationalism cannot conceal the underlying psychological motivation.

I am sorry Jammu's protest got into a defeatist channel. For no amount of transfer of power to the Centre can solve its problem. It must aspire a relation of friendship and equality with the Valley. Thus it is not the degree of integration of the State with the Union but of Jammu's status within the State that can safeguard its interests.

In 1949 I suggested political means to define Jammu's status. A year or so later, at the time of Constitution making, I pleaded for constitutional provisions for ensuring that status.

In sum, I supported whatever measure of autonomy had been promised to the State within India with the proviso that on similar grounds autonomy to Jammu be conceded within the State. It is too late in the day to dismiss a discussion of the problems of a region as parochial or communal. Even if my non-communal and non-parochial credentials are not sufficiently established by now, the fact that out of sixteen lakhs of people inhabiting Jammu, about six lakhs are Muslims, suggests that Jammu's personality can grow only at the cost of communalism. Likewise, recognition of genuine claims of Jammu can help in providing regionalism of the Valley with healthy and patriotic outlets.

We have faced enough troubles in the country simply due

to our refusal to take a timely cognizance of a regional problem. The lessons in Jammu and Kashmir, too, are no less instructive. Referring to the problem, the Chief Minister G. M. Sadiq had rightly suggested that it should not be thrown under the carpet. I am also encouraged by the open-minded attitude taken by Dr. Karan Singh.

I publish this collection of articles on Jammu with the hope that this time my voice would be more than a cry in the wilderness.

BALRAJ PURI

June 15, 1966.
A-4, Model Town,
Delhi-9.

1

Mind of Jammu was transformed more radically in a little over three months—from the end of October, 1947 to the end of January, 1948—than that of any other part of the country in a comparable period. Those Hindus of Jammu who had opposed merger of a Hindu state to the secular state of India soon found their illusions shattered by the sudden collapse of all resistance to the tribal attack on Kashmir and the petitions of the Maharaja for help from the Indian Union. It was an eye opener for them to learn that the Muslim leadership of Kashmir offered more effective resistance to the Muslim invaders and was mainly instrumental in the State's accession to India notwithstanding communalists of Jammu.

The Hindus of Jammu were again shaken by Sheikh Abdullah's physical presence amongst them on November 17, 1947, when he addressed them for the first time. The man so far regarded as an enemy of Hindus almost hypnotised every soul in his audience by calling for communal peace in the name of the Hindu Dharma, Lord Krishna and Gandhi.

Hindu communalism of Jammu was passing through such series of nerve shattering events when it was finally overtaken by the deadly impact of the assassination of the father of the nation. Meanwhile, the secular forces, which were more aggressively anti-communal than their counterparts in the Valley, continued their offensive and believed they had become triumphant. The offensive had started much earlier. I joined it actively when I declared it to be the main objective of my weekly paper, Kashmir Sansar, *in its inaugural editorial on June 27, 1942.*

The story of the eventual triumph of the secular spirit in Jammu is unfolded in the next article. How and why the ghost and the body of communal wolf were revived and the non-communal forces thrown to its mercy are revealed later.

June 1949

Triumph of the Secular Spirit in Jammu

Before independence, the political soil of Jammu was fertile for sentiments of loyalty to the royalty and for communalism. Possibly Jammu was the strongest hold of the Hindu Sabha in the country. Muslim intelligentsia, too, could not escape the impact of communal politics in the neighbouring Punjab.

The peasantry remained largely cut off from the urban

politics. Muslim Gujjars and tenants of both communities were mostly loyal subjects of the Maharaja and the landlords. For the communalist urban middle class did not provide an anti-feudal and revolutionary leadership. Hindu and Muslim communalism in the towns, to which the politics was mainly confined, provoked and sustained each other in a vicious circle.

In the Muslim majority area of Jammu across the Chenab, a part of which now comprises what is called Azad Kashmir, Muslim Rajputs were an influential group. They had fought many battles under the Dogra rulers to build up the State. Muslim Rajput landlords had thus some personal attachments with the Maharaja and were thus generally non-communal. But the people belong to a martial race and are upright and courageous. In percentage of population, the region topped all regions of the country in providing recruitment to the army in the second war. But for the influence of Punjab, its revolutionary potential could have retained a secular character.

Jammu defied Abdullah

The political movement that started in the Valley in 1931 under the leadership of Sheikh Abdullah could not sweep Jammu that easily; partly because of its anti-Dogra character. The political gulf between Jammu and Kashmir became as wide as the cultural and geographical gulf between them.

Somehow, Sheikh Abdullah could not trust or retain the trust of even his Muslim colleagues of Jammu. The important group of Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas was the first to leave the National Conference not long after it was formed. Mian Ahmed Yar Khan, leader of the National Conference Assembly party, did nurse a grievance when the deputy leader of the party, Mirza Afzal Beg, was nominated to represent the party on the cabinet of the Maharaja. When Beg resigned on some political issue, the leader avenged his earlier insult by resigning from the party

and responding to the call of the Maharaja to be one of the two popular ministers.

Among Muslim leaders, Chaudhry Mohammed Shaffee was able to extend an effective political base mainly among the Hindus of Jammu. But he and his band of workers functioned under a Congress committee and were organisationally independent of the Kashmir leaders of the National Conference.

Pockets of secular politics

However, two stalwarts of Jammu's politics, Raja Mohammad Akbar Khan of Mirpur and Khwaja Ghulam Qadir Bandey of Poonch—in the region across the Chenab, already referred to—remained loyal to the National Conference. Alas, the untimely death of the leader of Mirpur created a void in its politics that was only filled by Pakistan forces in 1947. Bandey, who returned to India under exchange of prisoners from Pakistan is still a hero of Poonch. He had represented the revolt of Poonch estate against the Jammu Durbar and thus identified himself with the local aspirations.

Another pocket in Jammu that slipped into the influence of the National Conference was the Hindu area of Chenaini. A popular upsurge against a Hindu jagirdar had been organised by the progressive section of the Hindu Sabha, led by Gopal Dutt Mengi and Jyotshi Ram Krishan. In view of the socialistic and secular character of the movement, it was later annexed by the National Conference.

In Jammu city, the Congress committee worked up in 1943 what was called Roti agitation, against rise in prices. The movement soon reached a high pitch when Hindus and Muslims shed their blood together under police firing. The National Conference leaders who arrived on the scene at that stage were too late, while the Congress was too unassertive to control the movement which relapsed into the hands of the Hindu and Muslim organisations. However, this abortive

attempt by secular forces considerably undermined the communal politics.

Apart from the pockets of influence of the National Conference and the Congress committee, a significant section of the secular politics of Jammu was among the students. Students Union, that came into being after Sheikh Abdullah's arrest in May 1946, following the Quit Kashmir movement launched by him, remained organisationally independent of the two parties and sometimes acted as a bridge between them. It was, however, much bigger than the two in numbers and more militant in its opposition to communalism and monarchy. The Prime Minister Ram Chander Kak, who had crushed most of the organised opposition in the State, found in the Jammu students a continuous thorn in his flesh.

The oldest political party of Jammu was the Dogra Sabha. It was staunchly non-communal and had pro-Congress leanings. But largely remained loyal to the Maharaja.

Maharaja Hari Singh who did not want his state to join the Constituent Assembly in 1946 and accede to the Indian Union in August 1947 was supported by the Muslim Conference and the Hindu Sabha in his decision. The Muslim Conference president Chaudhry Hameed Ullah Khan, who later presided over the Azad Kashmir, declared that he would himself take up arms against Pakistan's possible attack on Kashmir's independence. A section of the Hindu Sabha was not satisfied with the Maharaja's reluctance to accede to the Indian Union. However, Pandit Prem Nath Dogra's compromise resolution advising the Maharaja to decide the issue at an "appropriate time" silenced them. Daily *Ranbir* led the campaign on behalf of the secular forces with the twin slogan of "Release Sheikh Abdullah" and "Accede to the Indian Union". The slogan did catch the popular imagination, at least of Hindus, isolating Hindu communalists for a while. But the paper was banned by the Government.

The riot wave that swept over the country on its partition soon engulfed Jammu also, reviving communalism in its most ghastly form.

Perfect communal harmony in the Valley, Sheikh Abdullah's emergence as a saviour of Hindus and the national interests and the drama of Kashmir's accession to India in October 1947 shook the conscience and mind of every Hindu of Jammu. Gandhi's assassination later seemed almost the proverbial last nail in the coffin of communalism in Jammu. The nuclei of the students, Chenaini and Poonch movements, National Conference and Congress groups soon grouped together and expanded to partially fill the growing vacuum, created by the receding forces of communalism. Muslim Conference disappeared after the exodus of bulk of vocal Muslims of Jammu to Pakistan while Hindu Sabha was dissolved. It was a fine day for the anti-communal forces*.

Encouraged by their success and with a desire to enable the people of Jammu stand on their legs without any crutches, the then leadership of Jammu started a vigorous campaign for the abdication of Maharaja Hari Singh. The demand was endorsed by a large rally of workers at Parmandal in March, 1949.

At the time of writing this piece (June 1949), the forces of communalism and reaction were lying low. The hard won victory of the forces of secularism and democracy was still not complete. The two leaders of the abdication move M/s. Om Prakash Saraf and Amarnath were expelled from the National Conference, accentuating the problem of leaderlessness in the party.

(Daily *RANBIR*, Jammu, June, 15 and 16, 1949)

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*The reasons why the National Conference could not extend its organisational net work to fill the entire vacuum and to represent the essentially non-communal urges of Jammu at that time cannot be gone into here.

2

The leaderlessness of Jammu posed a serious threat to the integrity of the State. Not that Jammu could not have a leader. None was acceptable to the leaders of Kashmir who alone mattered. The non-communal leadership of Jammu could earn their trust in hardly greater measure than the communal leadership had done. In fact the anti-communal and anti-Maharaja groups were disowned more readily. Sweeping condemnation of Jammu as communal and reactionary by the top National Conference leaders further handicapped the local leaders of the party. Reacting to this attempt at character assassination of the whole people, I said in a press statement on October 1, 1949 : "The attempts to humiliate Jammu by characterising it as a citadel of reaction and communalism are extremely reprehensible and absurd" (Daily Ranbir, Jammu). Earlier on May 18, Jammu and Kashmir Youth Conference, of which I was the president, submitted a memorandum to Sir Gopalaswamy Iyengar, the then Union Minister without portfolio, expressing a suspicion that mutual distrust between Jammu and Kashmir was being deliberately fanned by those who wan-

ted to isolate Kashmir and make it independent.

My misgivings increased as the National Conference was not allowed to function in Jammu. Committee after committee was nominated and suspended. Sheikh Abdullah would refuse to discuss the problems of Jammu which he had entrusted to his second in command, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, who, in turn, would often refer them to his special officer, S. K. Raina, nick named as the viceroy of Jammu. The political leadership of the province could thus aspire to the level of fourth grade of Kashmir leadership.

In the following article, I expressed my grave concern over the growing barrier between Jammu and Kashmir, as seen by me in 1950. I believed that the process could be halted by raising the level of Jammu's leadership and harmonising it with that of Kashmir.

March 1950

Leaderlessness of Jammu

From Sheikh Abdullah to Sham Lal Saraf, every leader of Kashmir seems worried over the problem of Jammu. They complain Jammu does not conform and does not cooperate. They say a progressive movement cannot grow in Jammu. Somebody remarked that the tender plant of secularism could not take roots in the barren soil of Jammu. The other one is of the view that Jammu stands in the way of Kashmir joining India. Even Sheikh Abdullah has said that

Jammu is his headache.

Jammu — scapegoat

Why is Jammu a headache? Is it really as bad as the bad name it has acquired? Or is it for a search of an excuse that Kashmir leaders are giving a bad name to Jammu? So that if, God forbid, they do not fully succeed in solving the Kashmir problem, they have a scapegoat and can shift the responsibility and blame to somebody else. Or, if they fail to remove popular discontent in Kashmir, "reactionary" Jammu could be condemned for that.

By thus defaming Jammu, how much damage has been done to the National Conference and the popular movement? How far the attempts to revive the dying reactionary forces at the cost of progressive forces would succeed? These are our problems. The people of Jammu are capable of dealing with the supporters of communalism, reaction and autocracy.

But by defaming Jammu, Kashmir leaders have endeavoured to build up between Jammu and Kashmir a barrier higher than Pir Panchal. They want to hide their weaknesses and blunders by dividing the peoples and progressive workers in the two provinces.

Let us realise that misunderstanding and hatred between Jammu and Kashmir will ruin both. During their struggle against autocracy, Kashmir leaders often insisted on calling Maharaja Hari Singh's rule as Dogra rule. Thus they alienated Dogra people. The growth of political movement in Jammu was thereby checked and reaction was strengthened. The misunderstandings about Dogras have been so wide spread that many people in India are surprised to know that Dogra is not only the name of the ruling family but also of the community living in Jammu.

Let not the Dogras repeat the same mistake. Let them not engage themselves in any movement without the help of Kashmiri people or against them. Today anybody who thinks in terms of his province or community is an enemy of his own province or community. If ever we feel like getting rid of the present leadership or Government, who knows the people of Kashmir might want to rid of them even sooner. In that event, if we do not try to make Kashmiris our allies, we help their leaders to subjugate them for ever.

Dogras distrusted

Who is threatening the integrity of the State today? Whose interests are endangered by the unity of Dogras and Kashmiris? How to maintain coordination between them and the political workers of the two provinces?

Sheikh Abdullah has led the Valley for years. Today (1950) Jammu also acclaims him. But why is he diffident to become the leader of the whole State? Does he consider himself to be the leader of Jammu also? Does he trust the people of Jammu?

While condemning the communalists of Jammu on August 15, 1949, at Srinagar, Sheikh Abdullah challenged entire Jammu. He said, "If the people sincerely desire to separate and establish an independent Dogra Desh, I would say with full authority *on behalf of Kashmiris* that they would not at all mind this separation". (Italics added).

The irony of the situation is that the common leader of the State does not consider himself to be the leader of Jammu. He can speak only *on behalf of Kashmiris*. But who has demanded independent Dogra Desh? How many people have so far openly expressed their lack of confidence in Sheikh Abdullah? But are there any people in Jammu whom he trusts?

Leadership in Jammu

A strong leadership in Jammu is the best guarantee of the

unity of Jammu and Kashmir. Sheikh Abdullah would himself concede this fact. But what has he done to that end? Has not he, or on his behalf the High Command, perhaps deliberately prevented the growth of leadership in Jammu? What could be a worse insult of the elections and the elected than the way the National Conference organisational elections were conducted? But what was the fate of the leaders that Kashmir leaders themselves thus imposed on Jammu? Why even they were not tolerated? If he is unwilling to permit the evolution of a local leadership in Jammu democratically as he does not trust its people, I am in a position to make the following offer to Sheikh Abdullah :

> Please nominate a leader from Jammu who should be consulted for Jammu affairs, and should have as high a status as any Kashmiri leader (other than him).

We would try to rally round such a leader. This might not be a democratic way. But in the present undemocratic system, if Sheikh Abdullah's leadership is indispensable and the integrity of the State is to be maintained, this is the most feasible way to defend the self-respect and honour of Jammu.

I have no doubt that the people of Jammu would support my offer; so that we may know if Sheikh Abdullah considers anybody in Jammu worthy of his trust. If not, we shall then think of other means.

It is only after a strong leadership is established in Jammu, that its people would not only maintain their dignity but would also be able to strengthen their relations with the people of Kashmir.

(*DESH SEWAK* Weekly, Jammu, March 23, 1950)

JAMMU—A CLUE TO KASHMIR TANGLE

3

I was never an admirer of Sheikh Abdullah's Jammu policy. It was informed with ignorance and self-righteousness. In fact we did not see eye to eye with each other when he was in power. But that was no justification for lack of proper appreciation of his position in Kashmir politics. I therefore pleaded with the people of Jammu not to lose a sense of balance and be provoked by the utterances of Sheikh Abdullah when he was released for a short span of about 100 days in 1958. I wanted them to be more just to him than he was to them.

It has been my proud privilege to give even the most unpalatable advice to the people in Jammu. Whether they agreed with me or not, they have often been generous in their respect and affection for me.

On this particular occasion, Jammu responded splendidly. Having seen the consequences of its rash behaviour in 1953 and the working of the successor regime, Jammu was anxious to avoid adding any further

SHEIKH ABDULLAH AND JAMMU

complication to the Kashmir politics. Though my operative suggestion of inviting Sheikh Abdullah to Jammu did not materialise, I am happy to record that in the first quarter of 1958 Jammu lived up to my expectations in the standard of fairness and responsibility that it was able to maintain.

February 1958

Sheikh Abdullah and Jammu

I am happy to observe that Jammu's reaction to Sheikh Abdullah's release and utterances thereafter has been rather restrained. Many people did express their disapproval and displeasure. But press reports of Sheikh's speeches are more discounted in Jammu than in Delhi. Jammu has also a better appreciation of his hold on Kashmiri masses. There is no dearth of people in Jammu, who, despite their serious differences with him, consider him a source of hope for India. They realize that

a campaign of hatred and provocation can further complicate the matter. I am particularly impressed by the sense of responsibility and sobriety displayed by the Praja Parishad leaders. Their only apprehension was that the National Conference might so excite popular sentiments that they might have to fall in line.

Bitter and blunt advice

I am convinced that Jammu has maintained its balance and is willing to listen to anything that is good for the country. That encourages me to write the following lines on what is Jammu's duty today. I have no doubt that even my blunt and bitter views would receive due consideration and attention. For the people know me and my intentions.

No citizen of Jammu would refute the fact, at least in private conversation, that Sheikh Abdullah is the most influential leader of Kashmir. In fact he has not caused the present atmosphere in Kashmir. He merely represents it. Whether the Kashmiri sentiments are good or bad, the fact must be recognised that their authentic spokesman is Sheikh Abdullah. If we are not determined to alienate the people of Kashmir from India for ever, let us try to understand the real character of their sentiments and then try to help them in getting healthy outlets.

Kashmiri patriotism

Historical forces of the last few centuries, geographical position and recent politics conspired to develop a sense of Kashmiri patriotism in the Valley. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru played an important role in maintaining and encouraging this sense. He often stressed his own Kashmiri origin to create emotional links with the people.

He perhaps felt that Kashmiri patriotism would be a better bulwark against Muslim Communalism and appeal of Pakistan than India's name. Besides its constitutional position, Kashmir was also kept culturally and politically isolated from the rest of

the country. Even now, Indo-Kashmir relations and friendship are mentioned as if Kashmir was a separate country.

The first reaction against Kashmirism was in Jammu. The mutual tension provoked divergent trends on the issue of accession that led to the unfortunate controversy of the so called full and limited accession.

Expectations from Abdullah

Delhi agreement was not acceptable to the majority of Jammu. But Kashmir's present constitution and its relations with the centre are even today based on that agreement. After keeping him in detention without trial for four and a half years and persecuting his followers, we are asking Sheikh Abdullah to accept the same agreement and the constitution. Why did not we accept them in 1953?

If Sheikh Abdullah brings in the question of accession when he means to criticise the constitution or when he complains against India when he is dissatisfied with the Government of Bakshi or of New Delhi, he is to be blamed no more than those who want to make accession "fuller" and those who make loyalty to the government and country synonymous.

Whatever may be wrong with Sheikh Abdullah's views on accession, it is important to know why he holds them.

As long as he was in power, he offered to finalise the accession and in fact declared that the Constituent Assembly would ratify it. But the Government of India all along contradicted the Kashmir leader and insisted that the decision of the Assembly would not be final and would be further ratified by the people. They also maintained that as sovereignty belonged to the people they had not accepted Maharaja Hari Singh's offer of accession till that was endorsed by the popular leader.

Popular leader

Krishna Menon led a basic transformation in India's official Kashmir policy. According to the new line, Maharaja Hari Singh acceded to India in exercise of his constitutional power while Constituent Assembly led by Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad ratified it. In this version people and Sheikh Abdullah do not figure. Do we want to maintain that the Assembly became representative and authorised the moment its leadership was changed? Should Sheikh Abdullah accept the new version of accession by the Maharaja and the Bakshi simply because he had been kept in jail? If it had to be accepted, why did Pandit Nehru use to rebuke the Praja Parishad for demanding more or less the same before Abdullah's arrest?

Enquiry into 1953 events

Before demanding proofs of Abdullah's loyalty let us consider his demand for an enquiry into the events of 1953. He claims he never betrayed India and never demanded independence. If he can really prove as he says, that he did not want secession in 1953, it would be easier for him to play the role of a patriot.

Likewise, Jammu must also strongly support his demand for an enquiry into the circumstances of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukerjee's death. For the mystery around this matter made no mean contribution in complicating the matters.

I am not unaware of the lapses on the part of Abdullah. My purpose is not to exonerate him. I merely want to remind Jammu of its historic duty which it must perform irrespective of all his virtues and vices.

Indian rulers and separatist elements in the Valley have often sought to justify themselves by defaming Jammu. It should therefore be more cautious in its reactions and should not help others in passing the responsibility of their failure on to it.

Jammu's role

The people of Jammu must not lose their balance. Instead of angry and provocative reactions, they must try to befriend their Kashmiri brethren with love and sympathy. Local and central rulers have committed many excesses on the people of Kashmir. There is no better patriotism than to oppose them. For we should endeavour to prevent anti-government sentiment being diverted to anti-India channels. Let Jammu assure the Kashmiri leaders that as long as their movement is directed against the governments in Delhi and Kashmir and they do not describe it as a movement against India, they would get support.

In order to divert the popular struggle in Jammu and Kashmir in similar directions, it is necessary for their leaders to appreciate the real sentiments of the people of the other region. As I have better claim on the people of Jammu, I expect them to take the initiative. I propose that the representatives of all parties of Jammu should invite Sheikh Abdullah to visit Jammu and explain his true position.

Such an invitation does not imply any agreement with his views. Whether or not he accepts the invitation and whatever he might say in Jammu, it would not do any harm. After all Jammu cannot be converted against accession to India.

The invitation would also be a gesture of goodwill to the people of Kashmir. And without bringing them nearer to those of Jammu, they cannot be brought nearer to the rest of India.

(*SACH*, Jammu, February 7, 1958)

4

ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF PRAJA PARISHAD

Praja Parishad has been the principal opposition party of Jammu and the most vocal instrument of its protest. Till recently it had a special status within the organisation of the Jana Sangh, by having a separate flag, a separate president and a separate constitution. It became a regular branch of the all India party in 1964.

The area of influence of the Sangh is confined to a few regions, classes and castes. It has obvious difficulties in extending its activities to the Valley and among Muslims, Sikhs and Harijans—who constitute about 60 per cent of Jammu's population—and the peasantry. Even among urban caste Hindus, Sangh has to share a part of the following with parties like the Congress, DNC (left Communists) and P.S.P.

Nevertheless it was Praja Parishad that came to be considered more authentic voice of Jammu. The thesis of the following note is that the Parishad owed its importance to the policies of the Kashmiri leaders. Were these elements in Kashmir interested in deliberately strengthening the Parishad and thus

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building it up as a barrier between the Valley and the rest of India? Did the Parishad become an instrument (perhaps unintentionally) of such anti-India elements?

January 1960

Origin and Growth of Praja Parishad

To be correct, the Jana Sangh did not take the initiative in extending its influence to Jammu. The origin and growth of the Praja Parishad were largely due to local causes. It was essentially a reaction to the aggressive trends in the local nationalism of Kashmir and a protest of a region which felt politically ignored and condemned.

The Praja Parishad was formed by a group of dissident

R.S.S. workers. Even when the R.S.S. later came to dominate the party due to its superior organisation, its basic appeal was not due to communalism but to regional nationalism.

Parishad imposed on Jammu

There is much truth in the statement that Praja Parishad was thrust upon Jammu and the present leadership of the Parishad on it. For Pandit Prem Nath Dogra, whose leadership adds prestige to the party, did not join it till 1949. It is reported that he had offered, from jail, to give up active politics and lead a retired life. This was not accepted. After his first arrest, alongwith four others, the Parishad started its first agitation in 1948. The number of arrests offered did not exceed two or three scores. But by securing the release of the leaders through an agitation, it got its first encouragement. A year later the leaders were again arrested and the Parishad started its agitation for their release. This agitation, too, fizzled out and the president of the organisation tendered a written apology. But the leaders were released at the intervention of Pandit Mauli Chander Sharma, the then Jana Sangh President. The third occasion for agitation was the hoisting of the party flag of the National Conference at the Jammu College to which some students had taken objection. Vindictive punishments to the students and tactless handling of the situation by the police created a situation in which the Government found a justification for arresting the prominent leaders of the Praja Parishad who were later on released on the reported intervention of Sir Gopalaswamy Iyengar, the then Union Minister without portfolio.

On all these occasions, the arrests were made without any apparent cause. And while the efforts of the local National Conference leaders to pursuade the arrested leaders to dissociate themselves with the Praja Parishad were condemned, they were released either after an agitation or through an outside intervention, each time without any condition. This helped the Praja Parishad to build up a leadership and its own prestige.

Political vacuum

Jammu policy of Kashmiri leaders seems to have been marked by an attitude of suspicion. Not only non-National Conference leaders were suspected, they would not trust even their Jammu colleagues and allow the affairs of the organisation to run democratically. At one time the National Conference in Jammu city remained suspended for about one year.

It was in this atmosphere of political vacuum in Jammu that first general elections were held. The wholesale rejection of the nomination papers of the Praja Parishad candidates, allegedly in a pre-planned way, and the manner of the selection of the National Conference candidates, particularly from Jammu city, provided a further provocation to the people of Jammu. The resentment that was accumulating in Jammu due to numerous other reasons as well could get only one outlet in the form of the Praja Parishad when the National Conference had been made ineffective in Jammu by its own leaders for one reason or the other.

It was at this stage that regional nationalism of Duggar and Kashmir entered into a vicious partnership of promoting each other through mutual conflict.

(Bimonthly *KASHMIR AFFAIRS*, Delhi, No. 3, January-February, 1960)

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On August 9, 1953, there occurred an explosion in the politics of the State, essentially as a logical culmination of accelerated tempo of Jammu-Kashmir tension which eventually took the form of a tension between Kashmir and the rest of India. I and my colleagues had cried hoarse about this predictable and avoidable development. In representations to Mr. Nehru and other Indian leaders and numerous statements and writings we highlighted the explosive potentialities of Jammu problem.

Gurcharan Singh Bhatia wrote in early 1953 (in Janata) *: "National Conference and Praja Parishad represent urges of the aggressive local nationalisms of Kashmir and Jammu respectively. The outbursts of the Kashmiri leaders against Jammu help Praja Parishad in mobilising the public support while anti-Kashmir campaign of the Parishad simply provokes and intensifies Kashmiri nationalism of which Sheikh Abdullah is the hero. They are like two poles which apparently opposing each other, in fact, support each other."*

Om Prakash Saraf also alleged in his pamphlet, 'This Agita-

tion', *in early 1953, that Kashmiri leaders had a vested interest in the agitation that Praja Parishad had launched in Jammu. For it helps them to consolidate their following in the Valley. It also provided an excuse or justification for the separatist tendencies of some of them.*

We repeatedly pleaded for "autonomy of the State within India and of Jammu within the State" so that aspirations of Jammu as well as of Kashmir were equally satisfied.

That we were not mere Jammu patriots was also indicated by our reaction to the dismissal and arrest of Sheikh Abdullah in August 1953 and what followed. We condemned the action as undemocratic, short sighted and tactless. The decade that followed found us in the vanguard of defence of Kashmiri aspirations against Indian chauvinism. For us legitimate Dogra and Kashmiri urges were mere two sides of the same coin. The following article, written in 1961, discusses Jammu problem in the perspective of post-Abdullah decade.

March 1961

Explosive Potentialities of Jammu Problem

Can we speak of a *Jammu Problem?* How far it is relevant to what is known as the Kashmir problem and to the internal politics of the State?

By now it has become evident that the problem cannot be solved either by dismissing it or maligning those who raise it.

Praja Parishad (now Jana Sangh) has been joined by the

Communists in complaining that Jammu is not being treated fairly. It would, however, be rather far fetched to credit either of them with the responsibility of creating the entire discontent of Jammu. When the Kashmiri colleagues of the latter chided them for degenerating into a narrow and regional politics, their only defence was reported to be that they wanted to survive. Politicians, in fact, rarely create a trend. They often merely try to make use of it. Of course, some do it less scrupulously than others while most of them can also accentuate or channelise a given sentiment.

Crux of problem

Any political worker of Jammu can give you a long catalogue of grievances of his province in various fields, administrative, developmental and political. But the late Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukerjee, who brought Jammu to the political map of India, hit at the heart of the problem when he described it as psychological.

A psychological problem need not entirely be due to tangible causes. Nor can it always be solved through material concessions. In material terms, Jammu is possibly better off than it was under any previous regime. Relatively also Jammu's share in the prosperity achieved by the State in recent years is not much less than that of the Valley. In forests and transport—the core of the expanding economy—Jammu perhaps fares better. While industrial estates of Jammu are buzzing with activity, in the Valley they remain unoccupied. The contractor and trader of Jammu, too, are not worse off.

Discrimination

But none of the above facts is an answer to the charge that in official policies, assistance to economic development or recruitments and promotions in the administration, Jammu is being discriminated against. To take the charge too literally will be to credit the present rulers of the State with an element of

idealism—however narrow—of advancing the interests of their region. Possibly considerations of power and nepotism also dictate their decisions. It is conceivable that on these considerations alone, a region may get a better share than the other. But if Jammu does get more jobs, whose interests the new job holders, under the present set up, will serve—that of the Opposition which is fighting for their jobs or the ruling party? There cannot be any illusion about the answer. If still the people can feel agitated about the share of Jammu in the jobs and positions, it is due to the psychological satisfaction implied in it. It is fairly obvious that Jammu is hungry more of power than of material wealth.

Loss of power

The contrast between two situations of a community—when a member of it wielded absolute powers over the entire State and when none of its members has an effective share in the system of power—is too glaring to be dismissed as of no psychological value. If the non-Kashmiri origin of the ruler added sentimental force to the political movement of Kashmir, a corresponding but opposite impact on Jammu could not be ruled out. The Quit Kashmir movement, by basing itself on the demand of abrogation of the Amritsar Treaty which was applicable to Kashmir alone, impliedly conceded the Maharaja's right to rule Jammu.

This character of Kashmiri movement—whatever be the justification for it—created formidable difficulties for the Dogra intellectuals who were engaged in their own fight for democracy in Jammu. That a strong nucleus of them did exist and made an effective contribution to the politics of Jammu, is a remarkable tribute to their ideological clarity and courage of conviction. This very nucleus expanded, after 1947, to form a network of the National Conference organisation in the province on a mass basis.

What was the share of Jammu in power after its transfer?

The National Conference, which had assumed the entire power, was till then an almost a Kashmiri party. It could not find many people in Jammu worthy of its trust. It could not make an adjustment even with the anti-Maharaja group of Jammu. Strangely, the group that had carried a campaign for the abdication of the Maharaja and organised a deliverance day on his actual abdication in 1949, was expelled from the organisation.

The Political and administrative affairs of the province were entrusted to a secretary of a Minister. Jammu was thus ruled by what might be called fourth level of Kashmiri leadership. That gave rise to a feeling that the policy was not to discriminate merely against communal and reactionary elements but against the entire people.

After the governmental change-over of 1953, Jammu's share in power—in the ruling organisation and government—did increase. There has been widest dispersal of power since then in geographical terms. Far off regions of Jammu got representation in Parliament and the cabinet. If Jammu still remained dissatisfied, it was not so much about quantum of power as its quality and the manner of its distribution.

New frustrations

Firstly, quantitatively and qualitatively the share of Jammu city and Jammu District, the core of Duggar and most vocal centres of protest, has not increased adequately.

Secondly, in the new set up there was so much concentration of power, functions and decision making in a single person that the dispersal of power became less real.

Thirdly, gradually the new local power holders, as the situation turned out to be, tended to become more a source of corruption and patronage than prestige and inspiration. Finally, the process of "buying over" of many leading opposition workers by the ruling party further created a sense of

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demoralisation among the people in general and opposition groups in particular. To this may be added the frustrations that the people of Jammu shared with those elsewhere, which got mixed up with regional discontent for want of all State opposition outlets.

Whatever be the change in the degree of discontent, the will to resist and the capacity to strike of the people of Jammu have been markedly declined. The consequent frustration has possibly grown.

The current frustrations may usefully be studied, for the sake of analysis and a programme for action, in two parts. Firstly, those which the people suffer as citizens of the State and secondly, what are supposed to be due to their belonging to Jammu. In both cases cooperation and goodwill of the people of other regions is of vital importance. A regional approach for the solution of purely regional problems can be self-defeating. For it will force the people of the other regions to rally around the ruling group, however, unpopular it otherwise may be. We have seen how with the support of one region, the rulers of the State have suppressed the urges of the other region and vice versa.

Till Jammu and Kashmir learn to respect and defend the aspirations of each other, both will continue to suffer. We shall presently see that it is as much in the interest of Kashmir as that of Jammu to devise constitutional and political measures for safe-guarding the interests of the latter (which alone is the subject matter of the present discussion).

Handicaps of Jammu

Numerical superiority, political importance, cultural homogeneity and easy communications of the Valley put Jammu on a comparative disadvantage. For the latter is torn by geographical, religious, linguistic and caste divisions. Those who fight

for the right of Jammu rarely have an emotional conception of what constitutes Jammu. If Jammu is to get its due share, it must first strive to become a meaningful entity as such.

To the extent Jammu depended upon Praja Parishad for its ideological and organisational strength, its effective role in the politics of the State was reduced. What is worse from the point of view of Jammu is that the ideology and organisation, wedded to Hindu chauvinism of India, isolated the Dogra community from the rest of the province by creating a psychological barrier, along the Chenab, more insurmountable than the physical barrier of the great river.

Jammu's stature can rise as the stature of its leadership rises in the State. It is true that Praja Parishad at one stage, provided leadership to Bhartiya Jana Sangh, but its incapacity to throw up an all State, and even all Jammu leadership, has helped in dwarfing the stature of Jammu within the State.

In some respects, Jammu is in a position to take initiative. If Jammu suffers from some handicaps, it has also some privileges as compared to Kashmir, in terms of larger amount of freedom, for instance. It is Jammu's historic responsibility and privilege to take a lead in the struggle for restoration of civil liberties and extension of democratic rights all over the State. Those swearing by the memories of Dogra warriors, who extended the political influence of Jammu far and wide, forget that the weapons of nineteenth century have become obsolete. The real service that the Dogra patriots can do to the spirit of their past and the national interest is by extending the influence of national ideas and institutions.

Inter-dependence of Jammu and Kashmir

As the unity and strength of Jammu is dependent upon and will release the same political forces as are also vital for the unity and strength of the entire State, active support for

the above programme of action should be available from enlightened Kashmiris.

It is perhaps more than an accident that even on as explosive an issue as that of accession, aspirations of each region could only be satisfied with the help of the other region. The natural aspiration of Kashmir seemed to be satisfied with what its leaders used to call limited accession. As is now well known differences between Kashmiri leaders and the Government of India in 1953 centred round the degree of autonomy that the former wanted. The only logical corollary of the autonomy of the State within India was a somewhat similar autonomy for Jammu within the State.

It is now manifestly clear that Kashmir could not defend its autonomy simply because it had not conceded similar autonomy to Jammu. Likewise, Jammu failed to get autonomy simply because it did not support the autonomy of the State. The Kashmiri chauvinists who dubbed Jammu's demand as communalist, thus, did a disservice to the cause of Kashmir, while Praja Parishad by channelising the demand for autonomy into what it called full accession harmed the interests of Jammu. For, we have seen that merger alone has not solved its problem.

Perhaps the happiest solution of the Kashmir problem was the Delhi Agreement—as the agreement of 1952 between the Kashmiri leaders and the Government of India was known. It was wrecked mainly because Jammu was not taken into confidence and its misgivings were not attended to. The explosive potentialities of the Jammu problem were not completely exhausted in 1953. Whatever understanding exists or is further attempted between Kashmir and the rest of India can hardly be lasting as long as it continues to be threatened by the smouldering discontent of Jammu.

The political and constitutional measures outlined above—of course very sketchily—do require an attitude of sympathy

and understanding on the part of New Delhi and Srinagar but essentially they imply a crucial responsibility on the Dogra statesmen who are passing through one of the gravest phases of the history of their land.

(Bimonthly *KASHMIR AFFAIRS,* Delhi, No. 10,
March-April, 1961)

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The preceding article provoked a refreshing rejoinder from a Kashmiri leader, which was published in the Kashmir Affairs *(May-June, 1961). This is being reproduced here, for it forcefully supplements the other studies of the problem included in this volume, from the important angle of an enlightened Kashmiri.*

The author did not permit me to reveal his identity. Nevertheless I take the liberty of indicating that he was holding an important portfolio in Sheikh Abdullah's government and is still an outstanding public man of the Valley. At present he is under detention in one of the jails of Kashmir.

The fate of the author is a tragic reminder of the would-have-beens of Kashmir politics. Had he expressed these views when in power or had he convinced his colleagues to his views, who knows how different course of events might have been in Kashmir.

But how far we are wiser after the event?

May 1961

A Kashmiri Viewpoint

Debate on Jammu Problem

I do not know if the people of Jammu are in fact discriminated against. But from my point of view the important thing is that they, on the whole, have the feeling that they are being discriminated against. And why have they this feeling?

Before I go into that question it is necessary to have some

mental picture of what is Jammu i.e. what constitutes Jammu. It is not a compact area and the extent of its homogeneity has to be looked into. Historically speaking this region had many separate principalities which were joined together by a common ruler. But the common ruler did not, rather could not, bind them together. The tribal and clanish loyalties remained. The common interest of ruling Kashmir forged some links but the common man continued to adhere loyalty to sect, tribe or clan, for purposes of having a sense of security, which is a raison de'tre for such loyalties. Jammu meant the ruler and the beneficieries of his rule, politically it was not conscious as a whole. No leadership could come from the middle class or the upper class as both were identified with the ruling class. Add to this the fact that Jammu is mostly a mountaneous area with few facilities of easy communications. The geographical isolation kept the common man stuck to his ignorance, content in the shell he was living in with few chances of contact with the outside political and social currents. The only outlet for his suppressed energies was recruitment in the army. On the whole he had no opportunity to come into contact with and be influenced by wider movements. The people of Kashmir, on the other hand, have had the advantage of being homogeneous, living in a compact area and being influenced by the outside political and social currents. Easy communications, common problems and common feelings had knit them together. Political organisations with economic and social programmes were arousing their consciousness and maintaining it.

Vacuum in Jammu

Jammu, of course had also some organisations like Dogra Sabha, Mahajan Sabha, Muslim Conference etc. but they worked within limited sphere, and had no political and economic programmes. The sudden partition of the sub-continent and collapse of the dynastic rule following the upheavals of 1947 threw all such forces out of current and into wilderness. They lost their moorings and felt uprooted. In this vacuum came in

the impact and rule of the National Conference of Kashmir. For a while these forces were silenced. The National Conference of Kashmir had no roots in Jammu and it could not strike any. The net result was that the vacuum was left unfilled till 1950-51 when the general political consciousness in Jammu urged to assume a form. It is common knowledge that in great stresses and strains extremist elements come to the fore. It was, therefore, natural that the trends such as Dogra revivalism, Hindu communalism, economic dissatisfaction and political uncertainty joined together to fill the vacuum. Here let me digress a little. What is it which is behind a tribal, clanish or sectarian loyalty? Apart from social systems which might be responsible for breeding them, it is also due to the yearning and the innate desire for having a sense of security. In one form or other we all want to live in groups because that gives a sense of security. Where ignorance and backwardness prevail and fear rules, it is but natural that the common man should seek security in narrow loyalties. Often the politician, knowing this, exploits his ignorance, hatred and fear and makes appeals to such loyalties.

For various reasons Jammu provided a fit place for many to exploit the ignorance of the common man. In the beginning the Hindu communal parties of India, considering the princes as a prop for themselves, had an eye on Jammu. During the days of partition the communal parties had militancy in their programmes. Jammu became one of the principle centres of the R.S.S., the counterpart of militant Muslim organisations. There was more reason for R.S.S. to strike roots here. For the princely rulers wanted political support from the people.

Regionalism

Here my point is to recount the events which projected this semi-political consciousness into a larger context. So while these local loyalties were lingering, a need was felt for creating a certain feeling of fraternity in them and thereby binding them

together. Under the stress of events and circumstances it was but natural that this larger consciousness should assume the complexion of Hindu communalism. Jammu felt sandwitched between Kashmiri nationalism and Indian nationalism. These factors have given birth to a regional sentiment in Jammu which on account of the following factors seem to have been stabilised:

1. The dispute over Kashmir that has given rise to fears and perpetuated a sense of uncertainty;
2. The absence of good administration which could have inculcated in them self-confidence and hope;
3. Total centralisation of powers by the National Conference in Kashmir leaving little scope for local initiative;
4. The complex of being numerically less than Kashmiris and a feeling that the local leadership is not capable;
5. Unfriendly attitude from secular-minded parties in India who are thought to be more responsive to the demands of Kashmir than that of Jammu.
6. Shadows of Kashmir.

Jammu needs sympathy

I have hinted at the vacuum caused in the political life of Jammu and the failure of the National Conference to fill it. It was but natural that the local organisation should spring up to try to fill it. The Praja Parishad was thus born. Organisations like Jana Sangh and Mahasabha for their own reasons wooed it. So far as I know, the Parishad has no economic or political programme. Its present appeal seems to be to regional sentiments. But it goes without saying that this consciousness of the people must be channelised into creative and positive ways. It would be a problem to suppress this consciousness. It will add to the general discontent and frustration. It is un-

fortunate that in the name of the interest of the nation, the awakenings in Jammu have been silenced off and on. It is not a question of economic grievance alone; it is an urge, natural and understandable, and must find healthy political expression. Politically Kashmir might be important but so long as Jammu and Kashmir continue to live in mental isolation from each other, no positive forces of secularism and progress can be expected to emerge. Any policy of appeasing Kashmir at the cost of Jammu is wrong as also any surrender before illegitimate demands. It is morally wrong to suppress a people for expediencies. Suppressions will and do lead to wrong channels of expression. What is, therefore, required is to understand the people of Jammu sympathetically. This will benefit Kashmir as well. The policy of making a people politically corrupt, economically parasitic and morally bankrupt will ruin all. The strongest bonds are the bonds of moral values and concepts of the spirit. Man does not live by bread alone. Therefore the policy of victimising Jammu in the name of Kashmir and suppressing Kashmir with the fear of Jammu leads to a tendency which cuts at the very roots of State's integrity, resulting in the widening of gulf between Jammu and Kashmir and thus creating wide scope for exploiters. Often it happens that those who have voiced the feelings and legitimate grievances of Jammu people were coerced into silence in the name of the larger interest; many who persisted were dubbed and are being considered as anti-national. This practice of attributing motives has resulted in a vicious circle. Many grievances, legitimate and genuine by themselves, are being ignored because they are voiced by people who are thought to be opponents. It is forgotten that Jammu province is predominantly populated by Hindus. It is no fault of theirs. Therefore, if they have grievances, they must not be considered to be communal. Jammu and Kashmir happen to be linguistically different. The predominant population of these two regions profess two religions which determine and influence to a very large extent their outlook on life. Therefore the effort should be to find what is common between them and understand

them by understanding the background which moulds their outlook. Thus alone can feelings of fraternity be fostered between them. It must be noted that economically they are interdependent but the economic problems of the two are to a large extent different. An example would illustrate this. The problem of irrigation and pure drinking water is grave in Jammu. It is not so in Kashmir where the primary problem is sufficiency and cheapness of food. The allocation under each head cannot, therefore, be equal for two regions. In the political fields also the reactions of both these regions to stresses and pressures by reason of nature of circumstances are different. If the reactions are divergently opposite, chain of consequences widens the gulf further. It is unfortunate that without understanding this, interested persons exploit the situation and play one against the other.

There is, no doubt, widespread dissatisfaction and feeling among the people of Jammu that they are being discriminated against and neglected. To an extent this feeling might have been generated because of the political importanc given to Kashmir. But it is also a fact that authorities have not been responsive to public opinion in Jammu. A wall of suspicion and distrust separates the two. Regarding the representation of the people of Jammu in government service, the issue was examined in 1953. My impression is that the data showed there was no discrimination and neglect then. On the other hand, the figures showed that the number of posts held by people from Jammu far exceeded what, on the basis of population, they were entitled to. I should suppose that the situation has improved since then and on this account the people of Jammu should not have any grievance. Since 1953 the avenues and chances of employment for the people of Jammu have tremendously increased in the State. Outside the State they can in fact find many chances of employment. Speaking comparatively the people of Kashmir have not had such chances. The walls of political isolation for Jammu seem to have disappeared, but the man of Kashmir does not seem to come out of that isolation.

That is why we find that while many people from Jammu get employed in the rest of India, there are very few Kashmiri Muslims who have been able to do so. I would not have liked to go into this comparison but I have done so to show that the recruitment in services is not the real cause of discontent.

Recognition of Jammu's entity

In my opinion the trouble lies in the non-recognition of Jammu as an entity. It is obvious that the recognition of Jammu as a separate political and constitutional entity would not find favour with those who count. They fear that such recognition would lead to separatist tendencies. But they don't seem to take into account the fact that between Jammu and Kashmir there is already more of separation than of union. There is no common political organisation popular in both the regions. Any way, the political consciousness of Jammu must find a recognition. In my opinion Jammu lacks a leadership, wise and bold enough to channelize the recent political consciousness into creative ways. Jammu is a cultural entity. At least in that field it must have full autonomy. But that requires a wise leadership and a sense of unity among the people. At present they seem to be content with being played one against the other. The urges of the people of Kashmir had been suppressed for long. They found a sudden opportunity for their expression. Simultaneously, the question of Kashmir was projected into political importance. Therefore, the expression of these long suppressed urges assumes renewed importance and becomes the focus of attention and recognition. In this process Jammu remained overshadowed, creating and leaving behind the impression of it being neglected. Unfortunately the first expression of its consciousness were led into negative and reactionary attitudes which has harmed the cause of its recognition. Lately, some amends have been made but I don't think they are adequate. The present political atmosphere surrounding the Jammu people calls forth a bold stand on the cultural plane at least. I should therefore think some concrete steps

should be taken to give Jammu full cultural autonomy with constitutional guarantees. So far as the question of giving Jammu a constitutional status is concerned, I am afraid it is bristled with many difficulties and obstacles. It may be recalled that Jammu has been agitating for full merger constitutionally while Kashmir had been struggling for retaining as much of autonomy as it could. This has set in a certain habit of thought. With this in view any demand for conceding a constitutional status to Jammu would be very difficult to achieve.

I recollect that in 1951 and 1952 there was a move at a high level for giving to Jammu some sort of a constitutional status. A scheme was worked out and discussed thoroughly. A kind of federal relationship between Kashmir and Jammu was envisaged. It was, however, opposed by higher authorities who felt that such a step would lead to Jammu separating from Kashmir. Immediately afterwards the agitation for full merger in Jammu changed the whole context and the idea was dropped. Copy of the scheme is still with me but I don't think it would now be advisable for the people of Jammu to agitate for it and fritter away their energies. But, as I said, full cultural autonomy must be accorded. It is also very important that a fraternity of feelings must be fostered between Jammu and Kashmir and the present drift towards two opposite trends and habits of thinking which has assumed Hindu-Muslim complexion must be substitued by something common in which both will find self-fulfilment and opportunities for creative and positive urges.

Cultural autonomy

Cultural autonomy to be given to Jammu must be a substantial one and not merely an eye-wash, a half-hearted measure to keep them calm. This way no people can develop. In the formative period of democracy and stabilisation of freedom, it is absolutely essential that the local initiatives must be encouraged and helped. The imposition from above has suppressed this initiative. At present power politics has taken away the

chances for these local initiatives to develop and take roots. People must be believed, for trust begets trust. And no people can be treated or kept as hostages for others, for freedom and peace are indivisible. It is the common heritage of all.

(Bimonthly *KASHMIR AFFAIRS,* Delhi No. 11, May-June, 1961)

7

In the general elections of 1962 the main plank of the Praja Parishad (now Jana Sangh) and the Democratic National Conference (left Communists) in Jammu was that the province was being discriminated against in services and development activity.

This to me was a superficial and self-defeating approach to the problem. At a public meeting at Jammu on July 4, 1961, I maintained that the basic cause of Jammu's discontent was neither economic nor administrative policies of the Government but its feeling that it was not getting a proper share in political power. In my election manifesto that reached almost every voter of my constituency and many others, I warned against attempts to excite popular sentiments of Jammu on anti-Kashmir slogans.

The manifesto entitled The Third Way *and excerpts of which are reproduced in the following pages, rejected the two prevalent moods of the people of Jammu viz either surrender or aggressiveness to Kashmiri rulers. It pleaded for the third*

course of friendship and equality between Jammu and Kashmir.

I do not know how many votes I lost or gained due to this approach. But the hate Kashmir campaign did no longer remain an integral part of the election campaign of the opposition parties in Jammu.

January 1962

The Third Alternative

Jammu has expressed its discontent many a time and through many a way. But the discontent does not seem to lessen. Why is Jammu's voice without effect? What is the real cause of the discontent? Would the problem of Jammu be solved by the slogan of "full accession" or an additional share in services?

To talk of Jammu problem is not provincialism. Some

people are, no doubt, motivated by a provincial approach. They only add to the complexities of the problem as also to the difficulties of the rest of the country. But it is not only possible but also necessary to study a regional problem like this without parochialism and prejudice. If, for instance, timely and impartial consideration had been given to linguistic and regional problems, there would have been far less tension in the country today.

Other states of India, too, had problems like Jammu. But cultural, linguistic and religious diversity between Jammu and Kashmir is perhaps more pronounced. Moreover, Jammu's discontent and anger provoke an unhealthy effect on Kashmir which helps the efforts that are being constantly made from across the border to undermine the loyalty of its people.

Jammu—a wall between Kashmir and India

Jammu is a vital link between the Valley and the rest of the country. It is in the interest of the whole nation to strengthen the link. If an earnest and sympathetic attempt had been made to solve the problem of Jammu, the unfortunate crisis of August 1953 might have been avoided. It was discontent of Jammu that led to such circumstances as also devoured a personality like Doctor Shyama Prasad Mukerjee. Jammu was allowed to become such a wall between the Valley and the rest of India as has so far not cracked.

Economic distress as such cannot be the cause of Jammu's discontent. For there is incontrovertible evidence to prove that Jammu's relative progress is faster. Only two districts of Jammu pay more income tax than the whole of the Valley. The deposits of banks, insurance business, number of vehicles and consumer durables point to the same conclusion. According to the socio-economic survey by the Census Commission, Jammu is by far the most prosperous district of the State. But the same district is also the most vocal centre of discontent.

True, much of the new prosperity is rendered meaningless for honest and fixed income people due to rising prices, increasing inequalities, corruption and nepotism. But is it a distinctive feature of Jammu? May be Kashmir is a worse sufferer in this respect too.

Jammu economically better off

Recruitment to Government service is supposed to be another cause of tension. However, only a small percentage of population is absorbed in the services. Moreover, in the peculiar circumstances of the State, Government employees tend to be mere tools in the hands of the ruling party instead of being of any real use to the region they might belong to. Further as far as the educated people of Jammu are concerned, many of them do seek avenues in Delhi and Punjab whereas educated Kashmiris often find it difficult to do so without help from the Government.

It is neither lack of progress in economic field nor lack of representation in the services as such that causes discontent in Jammu. It is due to the feeling that in the fields of economy and administration, Jammu is being discriminated against. For it is possible for a region to progress despite being discriminated against. Whether the complaint of discrimination is right or wrong is not as important as the fact that the people of Jammu complain about it.

If for a job of Rs. 50, a man from Kashmir gets preference over a man from Jammu, it does not affect the economy of the latter. But such incidents do create a sense of humiliation and helplessness in Jammu. The obvious implication of the complaint of discrimination is that the people of Jammu look to justice to somebody else and do not consider themselves to be their masters.

Share in power

Lack of adequate share in political power is the most im-

portant basic problem of Jammu. On getting its share in power, Jammu's poverty might become less unbearable. But without political power and freedom, even prosperity cannot keep it happy.

When the democratic and progressive forces of Jammu were engaged in a struggle against the system of monarchy, their objective was not merely transfer of power from the Maharaja to Kashmir leaders but also to get it shared by the people of Jammu. The transfer of power from a Dogra ruler, however autocratic, to Kashmir leaders, however popular, could not be a source of psychological satisfaction to the people of Jammu. For Kashmir leaders did not share it with them. Not even the anti-Maharaja group of Jammu could win their confidence.

The way Jammu was ruled by the fourth grade leadership of Kashmir encouraged the impression that the new leaders were not interested in fighting the reactionary and communal elements of Jammu but wanted to rule it without sharing power with its people.

It is unfair to blame Kashmiris for this state of affairs. Their own worries are no less serious than those of Jammu. It is idle to complain against the rulers. For very few rulers like to share power.

Bane of Jammu

Jammu's own weaknesses are primarily responsible for its present fate. There are two set of weaknesses; some inherent in the situation others borne out of stupidity.

Not only rivers and mountains but also religion, language and caste divide people of Jammu from each other. Before demanding Jammu's rights, let its people remove at least the man made divisions.

To the extent Jammu fell back upon the organisational

and philosophical support of the Jana Sangh, it lost its effectiveness in the politics of the State. For it wrote off more than one third of the vital Jammu population i.e. of Muslims who despite their thousand and one grievances against the Government could not make a common cause with the Hindus. Likewise, about one third of the Hindu population i.e. Harijans and the bulk of peasantry could not join a front led by a party that was basically opposed to the land reforms.

Again, Jammu could not throw up a leadership of not to speak of an all State but even of an all Jammu level; though it did provide an all India leader to the Jan Sangh. Jammu's stature can rise and its voice can become effective only through a leader who is acceptable to all communities of Jammu as also of Kashmir.

Two forms of defeatism

It is due to these weaknesses that despite many sacrifices, Jammu's struggle has been in vain. That has led to a sense of exhaustion among the political workers and to defeatism among the people. Defeatism is expressing itself in two ways. First is surrender to the present rulers and second is to seek vengeance of current humiliations in victories and aggressions of a century ago. The first way is a frank admission of defeat while the second is of escape. The two ways between them are tending to divide the politics of Jammu. But obviously none is capable of solving the problems of the present. Self-respect of Jammu and realities of the situation demand that it should now follow the third way. This is a way of seeking a relation of friendship and equality with Kashmir.

So far Kashmir was crushed on the name of Jammu while the latter was deprived of its rights on the name of the former. If as a reaction to the Government policies, Jammu is provoked to follow the path of fanatic provincialism, it would enable the present rulers, whatever be their unpopularity, to rally round

Kashmiri people in the task of denying Jammu its rights. Likewise, if people of Jammu do not completely give up communal politics, that would provoke the Muslim majority of the State to organise on communal lines and align themselves against the interest of minorities of Jammu. Thus communalism and provincialism take Jammu as much away from its goal as surrender to the Government. Secular and democratic policies alone can lead to Jammu's deliverance.

Kashmir and Jammu, Hindus and Muslims would be forced to appreciate the reality that without each other's help even their own peculiar problems cannot be solved. The impression is sometimes deliberately spread that all Kashmiris are Pakistanis and every body in Jammu is a Sanghite. This mutual suspicion must be removed.

The difference on the issue of accession between the vocal sections of the two provinces, too, was partly artificial. To start with, the differences centred around what was unfortunately described as degree of accession. Those who linked the question of relations between the State and the Centre with that of accession, did not do any service to the cause of accession. For it is either accession or de-accession. There are no degrees of either of them.

We have seen that the slogan of full accession—besides causing irreparable damage to the cause of accession—has not solved the problem of Jammu. Which can only be done by enabling Jammu, through constitutional and political measures, to participate in the system of power.

Autonomy

Jammu needs safeguards within the State on precisely the same grounds on which Kashmir feels the need within Indian Union. Instead of sentimental and shallow slogans like full and limited accession, it is the third and realistic slogan of

Jammu's autonomy that can help in the solution of its problem.

The State that was carved and the areas that were annexed in the country by the ancestors of Dogras with the might of the sword can be retained by love and political weapons. Jammu is passing through as critical a period as it did a century ago. Today Jammu has not only to defend its honour but also the interests of the country. The best service that Dogra patriots can render to the memory of their forefathers and to the country is to make Jammu the channel through which Indian values like secularism, democracy and socialism may flow into the Valley.

8

Kashmir Governor Dr. Karan Singh caused quite a stir in the country by approving, in a statement to the London Times, in November 1965, the proposal for reorganisation of the State on linguistic basis. Earlier Romesh Thapar, elaborating the same idea in the Economic Weekly, *had made a plea for a Kashmiri speaking State. The Congress and Jana Sangh circles in the State reacted sharply and condemned the idea. The Chief Minister Sadiq called it an imported idea. "If this move was allowed to succeed", he said, "it would amount to acceptance of two nations theory and would gravely weaken the secular foundation of the Indian Union". He believed that the idea was fraught with dangerous consequences and should be resisted with "all our might".*

The Jammu and Kashmir Jana Sangh working committee strongly opposed the idea of dismemberment of the State on linguistic basis and favoured the formation of a bigger border State in northern India, comprising Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh (April 10, 1966).

Sticking to my own solution of the Jammu problem, that I had advocated since 1949 or so, I believed Dr. Karan Singh had served a purpose in provoking a discussion on the problem. There is certainly a room for differences of view on his specific prescription, but I would not condemn its basic philosophical and political premises. For I take it to mean that each cultural entity in the country must be recognised and provided with opportunities to grow.

In a public talk at Jammu, I pleaded for discussing the Karan Singh formula in this light. For I believed the author of the formula would not be dogmatic and would consider constructive alternatives.

December 1965

Karan Singh Formula

Report of a public talk at Jammu

"While India's superiority over Pakistan at an intellectual level lies in her ideology of secular democracy, at emotional level it lies in her recognition of distinctive and diverse character of all the cultures of the land, which are provided opportunities of development and enrichment. Let this superiority be established more decisively in the vital state of Jammu and Kashmir."

Thus observed Mr. Balraj Puri while speaking on *the implications and problems of linguistic reorganisation of the State,* at a meeting of the Democratic Socialist Forum on Sunday, December 19, 1965. Mr. D. C. Parshant presided over what turned out to be a very stimulating and lively, nevertheless, on the whole, a dignified discussion on the most controversial issue of the day in the State.

Mr. Puri prefaced his talk with a plea for maintaining a minimum level of logic and dignity in the discussion. He felt a public controversy between the Governor and the Chief Minister was avoidable and regretted that motives were attributed to the idea mooted by the former. Even if the mover of the idea was a very ordinary person, he deserved, according to the basic tenets of democracy, better respect than was implied in Mr. Sadiq's criticism. No idea stands condemned automatically merely because it was imported—though evidence had yet to be adduced to prove that Dr. Karan Singh's formula was of foreign origin. After all most fashionable political ideologies of the country like communism and socialism were imported. In this connection the speaker cited Mr. Nehru's famous reference to the Communist Party of India as a party with a foreign ideology, foreign leadership and foreign flag. That, according to Mr. Puri, alone is not enough to condemn the Communists who must stand or fall on the merits of their theory and practice.

After asserting that Kashmir was no longer negotiable, said the speaker, we needed and could afford a discussion of our internal problems, without inhibition and excitement. Those who sought to link every internal problem with the issue of accession hardly did any service to the cause of accession. Mr. Puri recalled that he went in a delegation to the Government of India in early fifties to condemn the controversy on limited and full accession. Accession, like marriage, had no degrees. Either it was accession or secession. As the nature of relations of a man with his wife should correspond to their mutual convenience the constitutional relations of a unit with the centre should be shaped by

the needs of the situation and in no sense measure degree of accession.

As free citizens of the country, the people of Kashmir had every right to demand any type of relation with the Centre or with Jammu. To doubt every discordant voice on the subject as treason was the surest way to disintegrate the nation.

Regional aspirations

An integrated and strong nation could only emerge, Mr. Puri continued, through growth and synthesis of various diverse cultures of the land and not by crushing local cultures. Popular resistance offered by Kashmir to Pakistan in 1947 was to a large extent due to the fact that Indian leadership had recognized and encouraged what Gandhiji himself once described as a sense of Kashmiri patriotism for which there was no room in the ideology and political set up of Pakistan. The crisis of 1953 in Kashmir was the culmination of a clash between Kashmiri patriotism and Dogra patriotism which eventually led to the clash of the former with the Indian nationalism which overwhelmed and crushed it. The secessionist movement in the Valley owed its origin to the dissatisfied Kashmiri aspirations. Likewise, communalism provided an outlet to dissatisfied aspirations of Jammu. For a while a dissatisfied Ladakh also looked nostaligically towards Tibet.

Mr. Puri contended that the aspirations of all the three regions deserved respect. Each had a rich—though distinct—cultural heritage of its own which needed to be further encouraged. Only by appreciation of these diverse aspirations, mutual tension could be eliminated.

While declining to formulate his views in 'yes' or 'no' to the Karan Singh formula, Mr. Puri was more keen to clarify the basic ideological and political considerations which should form the criteria for coming to a decision. Ideologically he was

opposed to the conception of uniformity which extreme nationalists like Jana Sangh would advocate, supporting unitary form of government, without state assemblies and any autonomy to cultural regions. This was what had been done in the West Pakistan.

Politically, he wanted adjustments, between the regions of the State to restore internal harmony. While he was very firm and categorical in his commitments to the basic considerations, he did not think it necessary to be rigid about practical measures that might be mooted.

No imposition

Kashmir had a legitimate right, according to Mr. Puri, to demand a separate statehood. But it need not be imposed on it. Nor should Kashmiris or any other people dictate what Jammu or Ladakh should do for itself. As far as Jammu was concerned, no solution would be acceptable to him that was not endorsed by Muslims of Poonch and Doda and provided for cultural variations within the province. For its culture was not perfectly composite and homogeneous. Likewise, the interests of non-Kashmiri minority in the Valley should not be neglected. After all in any arrangement linguistic and cultural minorities were bound to remain.

The speaker was definitely opposed to any division or re-organisation of the State on religious lines. Nor he thought dismemberment of the State was the inevitable means of achieving the objectives he had outlined. Various constitutional alternatives could be devised—including the one he had proposed in 1950, advocating some measure of autonomy for each region. But constitutional arrangements should precede by and were only required to regularise political measures. Conceivably the objectives could also be achieved without constitutional changes.

Mr. Balraj Puri, who was proud to have been a champion

of Kashmiri aspirations, had no less respect for the aspirations of Jammu and was not unaware of its genuine grievances. But the real tragedy of Jammu was neither the greater share of other regions in development projects and services but the fact that the effective leadership in the province only succeeded in dividing it into Hindu Jammu and Muslim Jammu. In fact that was responsible—more than anything else—for the so-called Kashmiri domination. This domination could not end by transfering more and more subjects from the State to the Centre, as was clearly borne out by the experience of the last eighteen years. Unity of Jammu, which implied secularisation of its politics, was thus a pre-requisite of raising the status of Jammu. A contented and secular Jammu would also act as a bridge, and not as a wall it had hither-to been, between the Valley and the rest of India.

No uniformity

After new political forces were released, constitutional means could be devised accordingly. There was nothing sacrosanct about any particular constitutional arrangement. Brothers in a joint family who adjust their system of life according to their mutual convenience better succeeded in avoiding tensions and retaining more affection for one another than those on whom a uniform pattern was imposed by authoritarian parents. Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh like good brothers should also determine their relations according to their convenience, without sentimentalism and authoritarian imposition. Even the break up of a joint family—if that became necessary—would not be as big a catastrophe as it used to be regarded. The linguistic reorganisation of India, after all, did help in removing linguistic tensions that often used to take violent forms. It took independent India eight years to discover that the best way to promote national integration was to recognize distinctive entities of linguistic and cultural units. This recognition was necessary in case of Jammu and Kashmir State also, within its present constitutional frame work if possible and without that if necessary, concluded Mr. Puri.

Discussion

A volley of questions, from various sections of the audience, followed this provocative talk.

Gopal Sachar: My party (Jana Sangh) has been misrepresented. We are not extreme nationalists. We believe in strong nationalism.

Puri: That hardly affects my line of argument. I do not think nationalism can become strong if cultural diversities are not recognized and a unitary form of Government, advocated by the Jana Sangh, is introduced.

Sachar: If Pakistan is not satisfied with your solution?

Puri: I have not suggested anything to satisfy Pakistan. We have already given an answer to Pakistan that would be repeated whenever she tried to force her solutions on us. But my friend should be more keen to satisfy the people of the State than Pakistan.

Sachar: If a particular leader, who is satisfied with this solution, changes his mind thereafter....

Puri: Even in the present and past arrangements, there was no effective ban on change of minds. Do you imply that no leader in Kashmir should ever be trusted because he might change his mind anytime?

Suraj Saraf: When you suggest that secessionist movement in Kashmir owes its strength to the fact that Kashmiri patriotism was overwhelmed and crushed, do you imply that Indian nationalism and Dogra patriotism were aggressive. Or did not Sheikh Abdullah seek an escape from a situation created by his administrative failure and maltreatment of Jammu?

Puri: While referring to a clash between Kashmiri and Dogra patriotism, I had not apportioned blame. I admit Jammu was not treated well and administration suffered from many weaknesses.

Suraj Saraf: But did not Sheikh Abdullah hurt the pride of Jammu, which is no less important than the pride of Kashmir you have been talking about.

Puri: Yes.

Om Saraf: Did he not also hurt the vested interest of Jammu?

Puri: Yes. He hurt pride as well as the vested interest of Jammu.

Bachan Singh Panchi: Were not you a part of the National Conference when it was an instrument of hurting the pride of Jammu?

Puri: Yes I was. But I was among the first to raise a banner of revolt against crushing legitimate aspirations of Jammu. My writings and statements on the subject in 1949-50 would amply bear me out. But our movement in defence of the pride and rights of Jammu was sabotaged by a more sentimental movement which sought escape for Jammu in the slogan of full accession or integration. Our efforts to get a better status for Jammu were also thwarted by its division on communal basis. While I was in the forefront in defending the honour of Jammu, the popular protest in Jammu acquired a dangerous and unhealthy outlet, that started fresh vicious chain of reactions, culminating in the crisis of 1953. Thereafter, undoubtedly I sympathised with the suppressed aspirations of Kashmir.

Om Parkash Chopra: You talked about the process of transfer of subjects from the State to the Centre. Have we transferred more subjects to the Centre than other states?

Puri: I did not compare Kashmir with other states. It was a comparison with earlier period of Kashmir's relations with the Centre. My main point was that the transfer of subjects as such did not help in restoring inter-regional harmony.

Arman: What about Kashmiri speaking population in parts of Jammu province?

Suraj Saraf: What about non-Kashmiri population in the Valley?

Puri: I do not know the exact percentage of Kashmiri population in Jammu and non-Kashmiri population in Kashmir. I would submit to the facts. But no arrangement can eliminate linguistic minorities altogether, whose interests should be duly taken care of.

(Daily *KASHMIR, TIMES* Jammu, January 1, 1966)

JAMMU—A CLUE TO KASHMIR TANGLE

9

I wrote the concluding article of this series on Jammu problem, with a rather optimistic note. The dust raised by Dr. Karan Singh's move for linguistic re-organisation of the State had time to settle down. In a series of discussions I had with the State leaders, I pleaded for taking cognizance of the problem and consideration of constructive alternatives. I revived my formula for some sort of regional autonomy to various cultural units of the State.

Encouraged by the response, I wrote the following article to elicit wider support for the basic idea. Perhaps for the first time, a Chief Minister of the State conceded the need to do something to ease the tensions that he believed did exist between Jammu and Kashmir.

But what is that something? How and when that is to be done? I do not have satisfactory answers to these questions. I am afraid the matter might be allowed to drift. Approaching general elections might be used as a pretext for escape from the commitment. Meanwhile people whose expectations have been

aroused might seek less constructive outlets, adding another unhealthy influence on the course of elections.

Would this be a further instance of doing a right thing at a wrong time, robbing it of grace and real usefulness?

June 1966

Jammu—A Clue to Kashmir Tangle

Kashmir Chief Minister, Mr. G. M. Sadiq, admitted with an unusual candour, while speaking in the State assembly (on March 12, 1966), that tensions between the two regions of what is officially called the state of Jammu and Kashmir did exist and a way must be found to resolve them. He warned against throwing problems under the carpet instead of taking cognizance of them.

It was not so safe or respectable to talk of problems of

linguistic and cultural diversities that abound in the State of Kashmir. Not long ago Governor Dr. Karan Singh almost touched a hornet's nest around his ears when he suggested, in a statement to the London Times in November last, linguistic reorganisation of the State as a way out of the problem. Happily, the misgivings then caused between him and his Government seem to be over. Mr. Sadiq's statement now indicates a joint interest in seeking possible solutions.

That both Valley and Jammu are satisfied with their present status, would be too bold a claim. In fact sentiments of secession in the former and of communalism in the latter are to some extent merely outlets of the popular dissatisfaction on this account.

Maulana Mohammad Saeed Mussoodi, the then General Secretary of the ruling National Conference, had said, a decade and a half ago, that but for Jammu, Kashmir's relations with the rest of India would have been settled without any difficulty. If the statement does not imply a blame on Jammu, there are many grains of truth in it.

If it is possible to attribute the crisis of August 1953 to a single major factor, it can be none other than the explosion in Jammu that had preceded it. Similar chain of vicious reactions has since recurred more than once.

Avoidable links with accession issue

To be sure, the problem is not peculiar to Kashmir. Even after linguistic reorganisation of India, Hill areas in Assam, Vidarbha in Maharashtra, Talengana in Hyderabad and till now Haryana in Punjab have posed, in essence, problems similar to those done by Jammu. But unfortunate, though avoidable, link of the problem with the accession issue made it so touchy here. Thus when Sheikh Abdullah refused to meet the aspirations of Jammu, his loyalty to the country was suspected while the agitators of Jammu were condemned as **communalists,** reactionaries.

Sheikh Abdullah's righteous indignation used to be aroused on suspecting a separatist implication in the demand of Jammu. Speaking on the independence day in 1949 at Srinagar, he referred to the "ridiculous" demand of "communalists" of Jammu and said:

> In view of the bitter lessons of the partition of India, how can we concede the demand of Duggar Desh. It disgraces the principles for the defence of which Indian army is present here and on the basis of which India's new order is being built. It insults the principles for which Mahatma Gandhi sacrificed his life. Anyhow, in that case (of conceding the demand of Jammu) our fight against Pakistan would be meaningless.

As Jammu refused to reconcile to its status within the State, an official publication of the Kashmir Government entitled *An assessment of Jammu Situation,* published on the eve of the crisis of August 1953, warned:

> The dangerous trends developing here (in Jammu) are threatening to throw not only Jammu but also the entire State into the lap of lawlessness and chaos.... Even a slight disturbance in the critical position of the State will tentamount to exploding a volcano which can create dangerous complications for India.

Why was Jammu dissatisfied? It was not easy for it to reconcile to the transfer of power from the ruler who belonged to Jammu to a leader who belonged to Kashmir. Most of the emotional content of Kashmir's political movement was provided by its emphasis on the non-Kashmiri origin of the Maharaja. It did not fail to create a contrary reaction about his personality in Jammu. The Quit Kashmir movement in 1946 which challenged the validity of the Treaty of Amritsar, in fact, merely challenged the Maharaja's right to rule over the Valley and conceded his sovereignty over Jammu.

The success of Kashmir's political movement could not thus appear to the vast masses of Jammu as the victory of the people over the ruler. The political and organisational character of the movement encouraged the impression that the power was transferred from one region to the other.

Jammu's share in power

At the height of Jammu-Kashmir tension, Jammu was represented by one minister in the National Conference cabinet of five. None of the important offices of the party in power—President, General Secretary, Vice-President and Treasurer—was held by Jammu. The post of Governor for the two provinces was abolished and the political and administrative affairs of Jammu were entrusted to a secretary of a minister.

National Conference could not find many people in Jammu worthy of its trust.

Apart from its numerical superiority, international importance, cultural homogeneity and easy communications, Kashmir was also comparatively better equipped organisationally and ideologically. If Kashmiri leadership could, despite the background of Jammu and Kashmir tension, hold its sway over Jammu, it was due, inter alia, to its outstanding stature and the ideology of secularism and land reforms.

Vested interest and communalism, on the other hand, further prevented the unification of Jammu under a progressive leadership. Thus confused and dissatisfied, Jammu's main reaction tended to follow two defeatist courses. Either complete surrender to the authority or seeking revenge of the current humiliations in terms of the past aggressions and victories. This obviously further added to the mutual bitterness.

To be precise, the demand of separation of Jammu was never articulated. The entire known leadership of Jammu conti-

nued to disclaim any such intention. The demand for internal autonomy was certainly made. But it was condemned as communal, reactionary, sectarian and separatist.

Demoralised by such condemnation, dominant opinion in Jammu sought escape from the so called Kashmiri domination in the slogan of "full accession". The debate on degrees of accession that followed caused another chain reaction of provocations and suspicions; not only between the then Kashmir leadership and Jammu but eventually also between the former and the rest of India. For, Jammu's pro-merger pose had greater appeal to the nationalist sentiments everywhere.

But emotional divergence between the two regions was far from resolved by the dismissal and arrest of Sheikh Abdullah in August 1953, the then Prime Minister of the State. Subsequent political and constitutional changes were even less helpful.

There is a built in provision for regional tension in the present structure of the State. For it does not permit any rational system of distribution of power among the regions.

Chief Minister must invariably belong to the Valley as it is the most populous region of the State. In order to meet the challenge of the secessionists at a political level, Congress chief must also be a Kashmiri. As threats to law and order, through sabotage, espionage and anti-India agitations, are more serious in the Valley, a local man is expected to be a better Home Minister. Kashmir's international importance further necessitates that the State should be represented at the Centre and at world forums always by a Kashmiri. In fact in the interest of balancing political factions in the vital Valley, and in the larger national interest, some more personalities have to be accommodated in key positions, say, as presiding officers of the two houses.

But how to reconcile Jammu with this arrangement? Jammu—it may be reminded—has an area of 26 thousand square

kilometers against 15 thousand square kilometers of the Valley and a population of 16 lakhs against 18 lakhs of the Valley (1961 Census). The irrepressible Dogras are also somewhat nearer means of protest in Delhi.

Cost Kashmir pays

Indeed, as we have seen, Jammu's protest had a formidable role in directing the course of politics in the State. Unable to wrest power for itself, it—at any rate, an effective part of it—has continuously pressed for reducing the powers of Kashmiri leaders and transfering them to the Centre. Unable to take the place of leadership, it has acquired, through sympathetic ears in Delhi or due to its troublesome potentialities, a say in disapproving or approving Kashmiri leaders for ruling the State.

Conformity to the political taste of Jammu—deformed by distrust and frustration—and consent for continuous erosion of the autonomy of the State are thus essential attributes of a stable regime in Kashmir. In other words, a Government must continue to lose popularity in the Valley in order to remain in power.

Surest way, to retain power, under these circumstances, would be to provoke sentiments of Kashmiri chauvinism and secession to such a pitch that they absorb and quarantine all discontent. For these sentiments then clash with the might of Indian nationalism and not directly with the leaders in power at the State. And for provoking Kashmiri chauvinism, Dogra chauvinism is the best abetter. Thus, chauvinism of the two regions and an unpopular regime form a triangle of mutual dependence till a popular upheavel upsets it.

It is not in the interest of the powers that be in the State to draw fine distinctions between genuine pride, chauvinism and secession as far as the Valley is concerned.

Thus the Valley has to pay in terms of its autonomy, pride

and freedom for its inability to share power with Jammu.

Kashmir is indeed a complicated tangle. But Jammu provides no mean clue to it.

Champions of the wishes of the people owe it to the people to first provide them with real and healthy channels of self-expression. It would be premature and presumptuous to recommend or condemn any disposition of Jammu and the Valley till their mutual relations are so modified as to rid them of the current abnormal tensions that do not permit them to think and feel in a normal way.

Regional autonomy

In this over all review of the problem, details of the proposed modifications of the mutual relations need not be dwelt on. But after the principle of what might be called regional autonomy is conceded, an expert committee should be able to draw upon, say, the findings of the Pataskar Commission, the working of the regional committees of Punjab and Andhra and various types of relations mooted for Punjabi and Haryana regions (before Punjabi suba was conceded).

In the light of the experience gained in the fifteen other states, it should be possible to debate dispassionately the problems of the only remaining multi-lingual state of the republic of India. Within the State also, the lessons of the last more than eighteen years have not been completely lost. Indeed, a substantial nucleus has already grown in both the regions that is capable of taking an unbiased but sympathetic view of the aspirations of the other region.

A fruitful debate is thus not only possible but also imperative.

(*TRIBUNE,* Ambala June 15, 1966).

APPENDIX 'A'

Population and Area of Jammu and Kashmir State

	Area in square kilometers	*Population*
1. *Jammu Province*	*26,087.11*	*15,72,887*
Districts:		
a) Doda	11,343.28	2,68,403
b) Jammu	3,234.70	5,16,932
c) Kathua	2,651.96	2,07,430
d) Poonch	4,374.19	3,26,061
e) Udhampur	4,482.98	2,54,061
2. *Kashmir Valley*	*15,119.29*	*18,99,438*
Districts:		
a) Anantnag	5,430.81	6,54,368
b) Baramula	6,567.73	6,04,659
c) Srinagar	3,120.75	6,40,411
3. *Ladakh*	*97,775.71*	*88,651*
Total	1,38,982.11	35,60,976

DOCUMENTS

Jammu in 1952-53

On the eve of "the Delhi agreement" between Sheikh Abdullah and the Government of India, the following memorandum was submitted by Mr. Balraj Puri to the Prime Minister Nehru on July 15, 1952 at New Delhi:

We feel like congratulating you on your support to the termination of monarchy and the democratic rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir State. However, at this moment when decisions are going to be taken about some important matters, we remind you to keep in view the following points.

Kashmir leadership has not been able to come out of the orbit of narrow local nationalism of the Valley and extend its influence to other parts of the State, despite whole hearted support of the progressive elements of these regions (particularly Jammu). We apprehend growing deterioration of the internal relations between different regions particularly when the policies of the Kashmir leaders are encouraging communal and reactionary activities of the Praja Parishad in Jammu which also banks upon the similar regional nationalism.

The time has now come, we submit, when the other democratic elements of the State, besides the National Conference, be taken into confidence while taking important decisions so as to get maximum agreement and support for them.

We suggest that during your current talks with the Kashmir leaders emphasis should be laid on the democratisation of the political structure of the State, safeguarding democratic rights of the people, ensuring freedom of the judiciary, making administration completely neutral as regards political activities and distinctly separate from the National Conference organisation, better and more realistic relations between all regions, granting them some sort of autonomy and lastly on economic amelioration of the people through a planned economic policy of the State and adequate assistance by the Centre.

These points, some of which were explained at length during our

meeting with you on April 14, 1952, are, we think, consistent with your democratic approach. We simply wish that your influence strengthens a democratic cause and not helps the undemocratic trends in Kashmir.

Demand for Regional Autonomy

New Delhi, December 21 (1952)—"Friends of New Kashmir" who met yesterday in Delhi, under the presidentship of Mr. Balraj Puri, expressed concern at the recent developments in Jammu and the growing deterioration in the relations among different communities.

They resolved that a better constitutional and political relationship is required to improve the situation. Some sort of autonomy to each cultural region alone would ensure the development of the respective cultures and maintain friendly relations between the various peoples, they said.

(*Hindustan Times,* New Delhi, December 22, 1952).

Jammu Satyagrah

Daily *Hind Samachar* of Jullundur discussed the situation in Jammu in its editorial of December 25, 1952. It wrote: "In this connection Mr. Balraj Puri, President of the Friends of New Kashmir Delhi, has formulated a proposal. Expressing concern over the Jammu agitation, he has suggested internal autonomy to the three regions of the State, namely, Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. Though it is little complicated, it deserves consideration. For no other solution is in sight."

Support for Autonomy

Editorially commenting on the demand of autonomy for Jammu, *Tribune,* Ambala, wrote on February 11, 1953 : "As Sheikh Abdullah is entitled to demand from us that we should fully appreciate his position in regard to accession, similarly the people of Jammu are entitled to demand that Sheikh Abdullah should appreciate their point of view. The people of Jammu must be given certain assurances. They must be assured of genuine regional autonomy."

Democratisation of Kashmir Set Up—a Kashmiri Viewpoint

Mr. Bashir Ahmad Mussoodi, a prominent worker of the Kashmir National Conference, told a meeting of the Rationalists' Association in New Delhi that regional nationalism in the State of Jammu and Kashmir was taking an aggressive form today.

He suggested some sort of autonomy to each region which, he thought, would create better relations between the people.

Mr. Mussodi also pleaded for some steps to democratise the set up of the State. He, however, condemned the Praja Parishad agitation and its slogan of full accession and partition of the State as they would disrupt the relations of Jammu with Kashmir and of the State with India. (*Hindustan Standard,* New Delhi, February 10, 1953).

Another Appeal to Nehru

Memorandum submitted by Mr. Balraj Puri to the Prime Minister Nehru on January 6, 1953, on the situation in Jammu, following the Praja Parishad agitation on the implementation of the "Delhi agreement":

The unhappy situation that has developed in Jammu is mostly due to the local nationalism of the various regions of the State taking an aggressive form. We regret that even Sheikh Abdullah remained essentially a hero of Kashmiri nationalism and could not reconcile himself to the role of the leadership of the entire State. Ours has been a voice against the anti-Kashmir movement of the Praja Parishad as also against the aggressive trends in the Kashmiri nationalism. We have also been critical of the undemocratic trends in the State and the regimentation in its set up.

Most of the Kashmir leaders have been suspicious of their Jammu colleagues and they were sometimes afraid of the strength of the Jammu National Conference. We are not very clear about the real motives of the Kashmir leadership regarding their Jammu policy. But we feel circumstances were often created which deliberately encouraged the Praja Parishad at our cost.

We suggest political and constitutional changes to remove the present unrest. The problem is mostly psychological and economic. Conditions must be created so that the people of Jammu may feel that they are free from the so called Kashmiri domination. An announcement for granting some sort of autonomy to each cultural region would considerably ease the situation. It is the logical end of what is being called "limited accession" of the State to India—which we support. We emphasize that the integrity of the State be maintained and feel that autonomy to each region would act as a unifying force between the peoples of all the regions.

Mukerjee—Nehru—Abdullah Correspondence

In January and February of 1953 Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukerjee, the then President of the Bhartiya Jana Sangh, was engaged in an animated correspondence with Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah on the problem of Jammu where the Praja Parishad had launched what was perhaps the biggest political agitation of the province. The Parishad had rejected Nehru-Abdullah agreement of July 1952. As soon as the State Constituent Assembly started implementing it in November 1952, the agitation was launched against a separate constitution of the State and for ek pradhan, ek vidhan and ek nishan (one President, one Constitution and one Flag).

A summary of the historic correspondence is reproduced in the following pages. For it provides the context in which the controversy over Jammu had been raging. The three view points appear to be irreconcilable with one another as also with that of the preceding pages. But my view point is covered by them in as much as:

i) Sheikh Abdullah believed that constitutional recognition of the vital human urges of Kashmiris (in the form of special provisions for the State) "should not be interpreted as a desire for separatism". (I would only add that recognition of human urges of Jammu, too, should not have been interpreted as a desire for separatism).

ii) Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru maintained that the agitation of the Praja Parishad was supported by communal and narrow minded elements in India. He was prepared to consider any grievances of the Jammu people and try to rectify them. (But what precisely were Jammu's grievances and what did the non-communal elements in India do to rectify them?)

iii) Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukerjee demanded (a) "both parties to reiterate that the unity of the State would be maintained and that the principle of autonomy would apply to the province of Jammu as a whole and of course also to Ladakh and Kashmir Valley." (b) "Implementation of the July agreement at the next session of Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly". [But how do these positions square up with his support to the movement for "full integration". The agitation itself was started as a protest against the implementation of the July agreement"].

It is thus possible to discern points of agreement in the three positions. But perhaps the political background of the personalities and parties involved made such an agreement difficult whereas their clashes pushed

the non-communal voice of Jammu to the background.

Letter from Doctor Shyama Prasad Mukerjee to Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru with a copy to Sheikh Abdullah written on 9th January, 1953:

I know that you do not see eye to eye with many of us on this issue. Yet I am writing to you in the hope that you will keep an open mind and try to appreciate the viewpoint of those who differ from you on this matter. It is vitally important that the circumstances that have led to the present movement should be impartially reviewed and effort made to arrive at a speedy and peaceful settlement.

During the last six weeks we have witnessed a continued reign of represssion. Arrest of about 1300 persons, lathi charges, tear gassing, shooting, transfer of ill clad prisoners to severely cold regions, confiscation of properties are the methods that are said to have been resorted to.

Very often the issues are sought to be clouded by refering to the alleged past activities of the Praja Parishad. If once we start questioning the motives of each other, the atmosphere will become all the more polluted.

We are anxious that the question of accession of the State of Jammu and Kashmir to India should be finally and irrevocably settled. This is still supposed to be depending on a plebiscite. We can expect no fair deal from the Security Council. There should be no question of taking a general plebiscite for determining the will of the people. The Assembly formed in the State is based on adult franchise. Even though doubts have been expressed regarding the validity of the elections, specially from Jammu, this body may be considered sufficient for ascertaining the will of the people. I was told by Sheikh Abdullah that he and his colleagues were willing to adopt this procedure but you were not prepared to approve of it.

The Praja Parishad rightly puts a pertinent question. If the ultimate accession of the State to India continues to be undecided and if the decision will have to be based on a general plebiscite of the people, what will be the fate of Jammu in case the majority of the people, consisting of Moslems, vote against India? We cannot forget our bitter experience regarding the vivisection of India and the tragic fate of North Western Frontier Province.

After a final decision is taken up on the question of accession, two

matters will have to be taken up. One relates to the recovery of one third territory of Jammu and Kashmir which is now in occupation of Pakistan. The other relates to the extent of accession of the State to India.

Shri Gopalaswami Iyengar, who moved for the adoption of Article 370 in the Indian Constitution, had clearly indicated that this was a temporary provision and that it was the hope and wish of everybody concerned that the State would finally accede to India just as other states had done. If the people of Jammu demand that the accession should be on the same lines as is the case of other states, they are guided by patriotic and national motives.

The provision for an elected President or a separate flag may be destructive of the political unity of India. If similar demands were made by other states, it would give momentum to dangerous tendencies of separatism. Again, the delay in giving effect to some of the agreed proposals as announced by you in July last, dealing with matters such as citizenship, fundamental rights, Supreme Court, President's emergency powers etc. has created misgivings in the mind of the people.

If the people of Kashmir Valley think otherwise, must Jammu also suffer because of such unwillingness to merge completely with India?

Kashmir Valley, Jammu and Ladakh represent different types of people; their language, their outlook, their environments, their habits and modes of life, their occupation differ from one another in many vital respects. Historically and politically they came to be united into one homogenious unit which we naturally should not like to disrupt or destroy. The task of maintaining natural bonds of unity amongst such people can be done not through force or coercion but by creating a common atmosphere of goodwill and confidence. It is a big psychological problem and requires delicate and careful handling.

The refugees from Pak-held area of the State, mostly belonging to Jammu, have not been rehabilitated within the State on one pretext or the other. Again nothing has been done to recover four thousand Hindu and Sikh women abducted by raiders. Constant abuses of and attacks on Dogras as a class by Sheikh Abdullah and his colleagues have created an atmosphere of distrust and bitterness.

Pt. Nehru's reply dated January 10, 1953:

Surely it does not require any proof to substantiate the fact that

violence on a widespread scale has been indulged in by the Praja Parishad people. The fact that a large number of officers and policemen have been injured and damage done to public buildings, is adequate proof of violence.

It amazes me that the larger context is forgotten or ignored or no value is attached to it by those who support the Jammu agitation. Indeed, nothing could be more injurious to the objectives proclaimed by the Praja Parishad than the agitation.

Suppose some remnants of the Muslim League in the Valley started an agitation which was anti-India or pro-Pakistan, how should we deal with it? What effect do you think has the Praja Parishad agitation on such people in the Valley or elsewhere?

Obviously, the case of Jammu and Kashmir State cannot be considered in exactly the same light as other states in India. It is not a question of our wishes or desires but of facts and rather complicated facts. Having considered all these facts, we come to a certain decision which I think was fair and which tied up the State to India very firmly.

This is only partly true that I did not approve of the Constituent Assembly passing a resolution about the State's accession to India. Our advice was that it would not be wise to pass that resolution immediately after it started functioning as this would lead to the conclusion that the Assembly had been called just for that purpose and not for other purposes.

Head of the Jammu and Kashmir State is not some kind of a rival President. He is the head of a state just like the head of any other state in India and can only be appointed after the approval of the President of India.

I am quite prepared, and I am sure that Sheikh Abdullah is prepared, to consider any grievances of the Jammu people and try to rectify them where this is possible. But the Praja Parishad is trying to decide a very difficult and complicated constitutional question by methods of war. I agree with you that we should not encourage tendency to separatism. But that is exactly the Parishad agitation is doing.

I am anxious to settle finally the whole Jammu and Kashmir issue. But this issue has got complicated and there is no magic way of solving it by decree or Act of Parliament as some people seem to imagine.

The right way to approach the Jammu question is to stop this

agitation completely and then deal with the grievances that may exist.

Dr. Mukerjee's letter to Pt. Nehru with a copy to Sheikh Abdullah dated February 3, 1953 :

The points which you have got to settle regarding Kashmir are following:

1. The Praja Parishad has considerable popular backing. Its past is irrelevant. What is to be decided is the merit of the issues raised by it.

2. When and how will the accession of Jammu and Kashmir State to India be finally settled. If this depends upon plebiscite, what will be its form. No doubt it has been stated over and again by you that accession will be in accordance with the will of people of Jammu and Kashmir. Our simple demand is that, that will should now be expressed once for all, and not left to an uncertain future. My own suggestion is that after a resolution by the State Assembly the matter may be considered as irrevocably decided so far as India is concerned. Please be specific on this issue and let us know that if this suggestion is not acceptable, what is your alternative proposal for finalising accession.

3. Secondly, please do not side-track and let the public of India know how and when, if at all, we are going to get back the portion of our cherished territory (of Kashmir) held by Pakistan.

4. Thirdly, if it is felt that there are some matters in respect of which our constitution should be amended in order to meet the special need of the State, let us have a full picture of it and know what are the specific provisions which should be amended. We are prepared to discuss the matter with an open mind. There are, however, certain basic matters in respect of which the oneness of India must be maintained at any cost. They relate to such subjects as fundamental rights, rights of citizenship, jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, functions and constitution of High Court, President's powers, national planning and financial integration. We were not satisfied with the July Agreement between the Government of India and Sheikh Abdullah's Government but even that has been unreasonably and unnecessarily delayed, thus creating doubts and misgivings in the public mind.

5. The grievances of the people of Jammu relating to their economic

advance, employment, rehabilitation, division of border districts on communal lines require investigation by an impartial commission.

That I am writing to you again inspite of your threats, abuses and rebuffs will amply show that we have no desire to precipitate a crisis.

Sheikh Abdullah's reply to Dr. Mukerjee dated February 4, 1953:

There is conclusive evidence to show that the Praja Parishad is determined to force a solution of the entire Kashmir issue on communal lines. I give below a few extracts from their speeches:

> "Our way is not with Kashmir. Sheikh is not acceptable to us. We cannot tolerate Jammu and Ladakh going to the winds"—Shri Madan Lal.

> "The present Constituent Assembly consists of seventy five members of which fifty are Muslims. These figures clearly show that Sheikh Abdullah's Muslim dominance cannot and should not be forced upon Hindus of Jammu and Buddhists of Ladakh". —a pamphlet of the Parishad.

The Government have received representations from Muslims living in the disturbed areas for protection against the Parishad terrorism.

You refer to the sense of insecurity in regard to the future of Jammu from which people here suffer. It is shared by the people of Kashmir and Ladakh as well. It does not lie with me or my Government to settle the dispute. But the Praja Parishad has flung the demand in such a way as if I stand in the way of the solution of the problem.

At a Press Conference you, too, have been reported to have said:

> "If the people of the Kashmir Valley think otherwise, there can be specific provision for this zone for the time being. We would readily agree to treat the Valley with Sheikh Abdullah as its head in any special manner and for such time as he would like but Jammu and Ladakh must be fully integrated with India."

You are not perhaps unaware of the attempts that are being made by Pakistan and other interested quarters to force a decision by disrupting the unity of the State. Once the ranks of the State people are divided

any solution can be foisted on them. You plead for the acceptance of demand of the Praja Parishad for the complete merger of Jammu irrespective of what happens to the rest of the State. You cannot be unaware of the possible repercussions in Kashmir as a result of this agitation which is led by a militant Hindu leadership and which in the past has made its attitude towards Muslims amply clear. If the agitation grows, unforeseen forces may be released which may seriously threaten the foundations of the State.

It is painfull for me to note that even a person of your eminence should have been carried away by an emotional slogan like ek pradhan, ek vidhan, ek nishan. All these symbols are supreme as much in our State as in any other. If internally there have been some variations, it is precisely because the right has specifically been conceded to the State by the Indian Constitution. This arrangement has not been arrived at now but as early as 1949 when you happened to be a part of the Government. So far as we are concerned we have maintained that the special position accorded to the State can alone be a source of a growing unity and closer association between Kashmir and India. It is worthwhile to remark that the loyalty of many of the supporters of the Parishad to the constitution and its symbols is doubtful.

You have complained against the delay in implementing the Delhi agreement. We had hardly implemented one of these decisions that the Praja Parishad launched its agitation. It has made it clear that it is totally against the agreement. On our side there has been no delay. The legal experts of the Government of India took time to examine the question and this dragged on till 16th November. On 17th November the State Assembly elected the Sadar-i-Riyasat (vide one of the agreements). He had hardly moved to Jammu on 22nd November when the Parishad launched its agitation, starting with black flag demonstrations against the Sadar-i-Riyasat.

The source of conflict is basic and, as admitted by you, it lies in the uncertainty in which the fate of the State is hanging at present. We voluntarily offered to associate ourselves with India and without compromise of the basic principles we like this association to be abiding. But unfortunately, the Praja Parishad wants a decision for the Hindus of Jammu in the mid-stream. The feelings of anxiety which prompt some to desire an early decision is understandable but the manner suggested for bringing it about is fraught with grave consequences. I do not know if the charge of separatism is deserved by us at the hands of those who would themselves like to partition the State on communal basis. The Praja Parishad leaders have made it clear that they will not rest till they

have rid the Jammu Hindus of what they call the haunting fear of Muslim domination of Kashmiris.

The Praja Parishad is using the weapon of violence, is trying to overthrow all the vestiges of an ordered government.

In view of the stupendous tasks we have been called to face, we do not deny that many problems still need our attention in Jammu as well as elsewhere. The Government has recently set up a committee under the chairmanship of the Chief Justice to report on the working of some measures adopted during the last five years. The Government are eager to have constructive suggestions.

Pt. Nehru's reply to Dr. Mukerjee dated February 5, 1953:

According to my thinking, the agitation of the Praja Parishad in Jammu is not only communal but is supported by communal and narrow-minded elements in India. I have not a shadow of doubt that if that narrow approach was adopted in our country as a whole, it would bring disaster in its train not only for the Jammu and Kashmir State but also to the larger interests of India. The only course I can, therefore, follow is to resist this utterly miconceived agitation.

If the agitation has been mainly concerned with the grievances of the people of Jammu, the appointment of a Commission of enquiry by the State Government would have been welcome. Gradually one is driven to the conclusion that this is not a normal agitation for the redress of grievances, but is an attempt to start a subversive movement affecting not Jammu only but the rest of India.

Dr. Mukerjee's letter to Pt. Nehru dated February 8, 1953:

Apparently you are not in a mood even to understand the views of those who differ from you, far less to talk to them.

The Commission has not roused any hope or confidence. Its terms of reference are narrow. Its composition is defective. It has to work in an atmosphere surcharged with distrust and bitterness. It cannot obviously deal wih basic political and constitutional matters.

If it is decided by you to start discussions with Praja Parishad leaders and others, the movement should stand suspended.

Pt. Nehru's reply dated February 10, 1953:

I confess to a feeling that we move in some-what different mental worlds and the same words have different meanings for you and me.

However, nothing would please me better than to put an end to this business (agitation). As for he composition of the Commission, it is presided over by the Chief Justice, who can be relied upon to take an impartial view. The terms of reference are wide but certainly they do not deal with political and constitutional issue. Would you have a commission sit in judgement over Parliament and decide grave national and international issues?

I fail entirely to understand how high constitutional matters, affecting international issues, can be made the subject of a local agitation. Is the entire country and Parliament to be coerced by the local group?

I have no doubt that you wish well to India but the fact remains that our conceptions of what is well for India appear to differ.

If I could venture to advise you, I would suggest that you exercise your influence to put an end to this agitation which cannot possibly do any good and which can certainly do much harm.

Dr. Mukerjee's letter to Pt. Nehru dated February 12, 1953:

I am equally anxious with you that the present movement should terminate. I would suggest that you and Sheikh Abdullah should meet some of its leaders preferably in Delhi. If this offer is communicated to them, they will, I hope, agree to suspend the movement.

[The points suggested for consideration were the same as were mentioned in his second letter to which were added, firstly the demand for a Commission of Enquiry with a majority of judges from outside the State to go into all grievances including Dharmarth Trust, excesses committed by police and compensation to the families of sufferers, and secondly the demand for restoration of pensions, properties etc. confiscated during the agitation.]

Pt. Nehru's reply dated February 12, 1953:

The points for consideration that you have suggested are most of them hardly capable of consideration even by Government itself and much less so with non-official organisations or individuals.

The resolution of the State Assembly does not bring finality in the sense that you perhaps mean. The finality is tied up with other considerations which are not wholly within our control.

Some of the matters you have referred to have been included in the Constitution being framed by the Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir. One cause of delay in doing this has been, I imagine, this agitation.

It has been stated very clearly and acted upon that the Indian Flag is supreme.

Regarding the policy for the liberation and occupation of Pakistan held territory, this is surely not a question that can be discussed, as it depends upon all kinds of political and military matters. Indeed the Jammu agitation has made it much more difficult to deal with the question of that territory, because it must have created far reaching repercussions on the people there. We do not think in terms of holding any territory by force of arms and have to rely on the goodwill of the people concerned.

You can imagine the effect of the present agitation not only on those hostile to us but also in other countries and more especially on the conversations taking place in Geneva (with Dr. Graham and Pakistan representative).

Dr. Mukerjee's letter to Sheikh Abdullah dated February 13, 1953:

One fundamental point where I differ from you is your attitude towards the Praja Parishad. You had maintained, when I met you at Srinagar, that first, it had no following and secondly, its past was so black that you could never associate with its spokesmen. Regarding the first point your estimate has proved incorrect. Your second point is hardly tenable. Did not Gandhiji and others go out of the way to attempt to come to settlement, even with Mr. Jinnah and others whose attitude towards national problems was far from patriotic?

Apart from the soundness or otherwise of the system of hereditary rulership in the modern set up, the attitude of hostility towards the Maharaja, who by dint of his own decision, has become politically powerless, was indeed unnecessary. But when some time this overstepped its limits and extended itself to an attack on Dogras as such it became a source of dangerous developments. I had earnestly requested you to take all possible steps to create a new psychological atmosphere in the

State so that spontaneously all sections of the people might regard you as their acknowledged leader.

I would beg of you not to stand on prestige but to agree to discuss all disputes with the leaders of the Praja Parishad even at this late stage.

Consciously or unconsciously you are creating a new sovereignty for Jammu and Kashmir State. You are developing a three nations theory, the third being Kashmiris. These are dangerous symptoms.

I do not ignore the need for creating an atmosphere of complete understanding and confidence in the minds of Muslims. But there are limits within which such attempts must be kept confined, nor such attempts should be made in a manner which may cause grave doubts and fears in the minds of non-Muslims living in the State and forming a definite minority.

Dr. Mukerjee's letter to Pt. Nehru dated February 14, 1953:

The issues have been narrowed down. I suggest you should agree to meet some selected representatives of the Praja Parishad and this should be followed by an immediate suspension of the movement.

I earnestly urge you and Sheikh Abdullah to permit a resolution supporting accession to be passed by the Constituent Assembly. Regarding liberation of Pak-held territory no public declaration be made but a fuller appreciation of the situation can be made as a result of your discussion with the people concerned.

If, as you say, the Indian flag is supreme, its daily official use may be agreed upon. The State flag may be used in addition on special occasions.

Regarding the applicability of the provisions of the Constitution, we need not have any difficulty in agreeing to the minimum number of subjects which will be immediately applied to Jammu and Kashmir. As regards the rest, we may postpone consideration till we know what specific proposals the State authorities have to make for the purpose.

As regards grievances, the only question is to prepare comprehensive terms of reference and have a tribunal which will enjoy the confidence of all concerned. Release of prisoners and withdrawal of bans and punishment need not present any difficulty.

Pt. Nehru's reply dated February 15, 1953:

As I have pointed out to you, every State normally deals with these problems itself and the Central Government does not intervene except by way of advice occasionally.

The Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir State will be meeting some time in the near future. It will presumably consider the reports of certain committees appointed by it. I do not see how even the Kashmir Government can bypass all this procedure.

The Constituent Assembly has every right to express its views on accession as well as other matters but the assurances we have given to the U.N. are our responsibility and have to be judged accordingly.

The Government will gladly do all in its power to bring about normality and peaceful co-operation in Jammu and Kashmir State. But this agitation is not of our seeking and the first step should be to withdraw the agitation completely.

Dr. Mukerjee's letter to Pt. Nehru dated February 17, 1953:

The real question is how the movement should be brought to an end. I had suggested a procedure which apparently is not acceptable to you. Unfortunately you have made no alternative suggestion. After considering the matter fully and also your determination that the movement must be withdrawn completely as first step, may I suggest the following procedure for your consideration:—

1. The movement is withdrawn.

2. Order for the release of prisoners is given and there will be no victimisation.

3. You and Sheikh Abdullah call a conference say, after a fortnight where all political and constitutional matters are discussed with an open mind.

4. Both parties reiterate that the unity of the State will be maintained and that the principle of autonomy will apply to the province of Jammu as a whole and of course also to Ladakh and Kashmir Valley.

5. The new Constitution to come into force as soon as possible

and elections to take place within, say, six months.

6. Implementation of the July agreement will be made at the next session of Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly.

7. The terms of reference of the Commission of Enquiry will be defined.

8. The Commission should be reconstituted with 2 Judges from India and Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir.

9. Regarding finality of accession and other matters, the conference will seek to reach an agreement.

I have gone the utmost that I can for reaching a settlement. If, however, you have finally decided that the movement is to be withdrawn unconditionally and there can be no understanding regarding any other point then I shall have to conclude with deep regret that I have failed in my efforts.

Sheikh Abdullah's letter to Dr. Mukerjee dated February 18, 1953:

You assume that we object to the total application of the Indian Constitution on the ground that "Muslims of Kashmir may lean towards Pakistan". This is totally a false impression of the political maturity of the people of Kashmir. You admit the merits of our struggle against Muslim communalism and I am grateful to you for your complimentary remarks about me in this connection. I do not know why I should become a suspect and my motives should be doubted when I condemn communalism of a section of Hindus. While fighting Muslim communalism we were aware of a similar danger in India. But we were convinced that the vast majority of the people in India under the leadership of Gandhiji were themselves fighting this menace. But if at anytime India falters and forsakes these ideals, I have no doubt that even then the people of Kashmir will not lean towards communalism.

The enlightened opinion in India recognised the vital human urges of Kashmiris and the Constituent Assembly of India afforded them opportunities of achieving their political and social objectives. This mutual accommodation of each others' point of view, which has been accorded constitutional sanction, should not be interpreted as a desire for separatism. After all in a democratic country, the ultimate factor which decides the relationship between various units is the measure of willingness of

each of these parts to come closer to each other for the common good of all. History has taught us that false notions of uniformity and conformity have often led to disastrous consequences in the lives of many nations.

Our choice to accede to India was justified as we were afforded opportunities to pursue democratic and progressive objectives. Your suggestions in regard to abridging the scope of our internal freedom would lead to a denial of such opportunities.

It was late Sardar Patel who was instrumental in evolving the present basis of the State's relationship with the Union. Article 370 was incorporated in the Constitution under his guidance and at the time Shri Nehru was away from India. While explaining Kashmir's constitutional relations with India Sardar Patel said:

> "In view of the special problems with which the Jammu and Kashmir Government is faced, we have made special provision for the continuance of the relationship of the State with the Union on the existing basis."

Regarding the election of Sadar-i-Riyasat, you perhaps forget that the Governors of other states are also appointed with the consultation of the State Governments. We have extended this right to the legislature. While you prefer English designation of 'Governor', I fail to understand why the Hindustani nomenclature of Sadar-i-Riyasat should be objected to.

You have referred to the creation of a "republic within a republic". Perhaps you would accept "monarchy within a republic".

While referring to the Praja Parishad you do not mention its connection with the R.S.S. Every one is familiar with the role of the R.S.S. leaders in Jammu in 1947 precisely at the time when we were resisting Muslim communalism in Kashmir. So long as this organisation continues to be an instrument in the hands of the R.S.S. leaders, I regret it will not be possible for us to recognise it.

It is an extremely unjust accusation to charge us with attacking Dogras. We know them to be simple hearted, honest, faithful and brave people. It is pity that some people should take advantage of their simplicity and mislead them.

Much concern has been shown for the Maharaja in India. The responsibility of the complications in which India and the State are

involved at present rests with the Maharaja and his chronic indecision. All the efforts made by the top leaders of India including Gandhiji, Sardar Patel, Shri Nehru and Shri Kripalani were foiled by his consistent refusal to have any truck with patriotic and nationalist forces within the State who were clamped in jails.

In your letter to Shri Nehru you propose to completely undo Indo-Kashmir agreements yet you would like them to be implemented speedily. I do not know what to make of these contradictions.

Dr. Mukerjee's letter to Sheikh Abdullah dated February 23, 1953:

When you think that a special provision was made for the accession of the State of Jammu and Kashmir or that you enjoy limited sovereignty, you do so in utter disregard of the historical circumstances under which the scheme of integration was forced on India by the British Government. I would beg of you not to take up an entirely legalistic stand. You are the Indian first and anything else next.

Even assuming that your interpretation of Article 370 is constitutionally correct, my appeal to you is to finalise the accession and agree to be governed by the Indian constitution with such modifications, if any, as may be specially required for the welfare of the State and will not be harmful to the interests of India as a whole. My own view is that the Government of India should accept the decision of the Consembly on accession and close the matter.

The integrity of the State should of course be maintained. What I, however, said was that in case the people of Jammu wanted full accession and the people of Kashmir wanted a loose integration, clash and conflict was inevitable. One possible solution might be to form Kashmir Valley into a separate State and give it whatever it wants for development. But let us drop this idea altogether and think in terms of united Jammu and Kashmir and find out how to consolidate it.

I have been unable to understand your refusal even to talk to the representatives of the Praja Parishad. I shall close this correspondence with deep regret that we could not come to an agreement in spite of the grave danger that lies ahead of us.

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Further Reading on Jammu

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